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No. 120.

## MUSIC ON THE WATER.

BY MAP HAZARD.

The sun sinks in the golden west—  
The stars come twinkling one by one—  
The sweet-toned warbler seeks his nest—  
All nature sleeps—the day is done.

A shield of silver rides the moon—  
And flings her shen on the rippling mere,  
From voice and love in sweet attire,  
Falls music soft on the listening ear.

A wailing cry from a bleeding heart,  
It fleighs the air with its load of woe,  
And a music, warm tears of pity start,  
In eyes unused to their tender flow.

The minstrel, lost in her moving theme,  
Seems pouring forth her soul in song;  
I bow my head on my hands and dream,  
And things long past on my memory throng.

And now is spent that low-breathed plaint,  
And stilled the voice of harp and lip;  
All sounds are hushed, save the murmur faint  
Of ripples, stirred by the oar's dip.

ROYAL KEENE,

## California Detective: The Witches of New York.

A ROMANCE OF FOUR GIRLS' LIVES.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "OVERLAND KIT," "WOLF DEMON," "ACE  
OF SPADES," "RED MAZEPA," ETC.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### PREPARING FOR BATTLE.

A SLIGHT quiver agitated Van Rensselaer's handsome face as he listened to the threat of the Californian.

"You place the rope of the hangman around my throat?" he said.

"That's my little game, to use the slang term," replied the detective, coolly.

"You will find it to be a difficult matter."

"But I'll do it, you can bet all your rocks on that. You murdered O'Kale, and for that murder you must answer to the law."

"You in person will not call me to an account," Van Rensselaer said, a sneer upon his lips.

"It would be poor and paltry vengeance for me, if my hand alone were to strike you. Had I wished to constitute myself the minister of justice, I should not have taken the trouble to visit you and forewarn you of your danger. But I wish you to know that I am living—that I am on your trail, and that my purpose is to give you a shameful death. You must know that the blow comes from me, or else my vengeance would lose half its sweetness."

"Your words sound like an old-time romance," Van Rensselaer said, flippantly.

"You really take the trouble to warn me of the danger that I am in."

"Exactly; that you may be on your guard," replied the Californian, quietly. "It is to be a fair and open fight between us—no bushwhacking—and, as the old-time romance would say, may God defend the right."

Van Rensselaer's lip curled in disdain.

Now for the programme," continued the white-haired detective. "In the first place, I am going to strike at your reputation. You are part owner of a gambling-room on Twenty-third street. I propose to let the public at large know that fact. I intend to hold you up before all New York as a cheating rascal—a blackleg."

Van Rensselaer started, and cast a glance of fire at the Californian, but it did not trouble that cool and determined gentleman in the least.

"Then, that great and good work accomplished, I'm going to strike at your fortune," continued Bright. "Your half-sister, Alice—I intend to find her and give her the rights to which the law entitles her. After these two blows—the first at your reputation, the second at your fortune—I strike at your life; but the law will be the weapon that I shall use."

"And you intend to do all this?" Van Rensselaer questioned, in contempt.

"You've heard my programme."

"You have forgotten one very important fact."

"Indeed! and what is it?" asked the detective, not in the least disturbed.

"A certain paper, calling for a hundred dollars, purporting to be signed by me and bearing your indorsements," Van Rensselaer said, a cold look in his clear blue eyes, and a tone of triumph in his voice.

"Bless you! I remember all about that," Bright said, carelessly.

"That paper is still in existence, still in my possession, still a weapon against you. I can revive the old forgery charge and send you up to Sing Sing, where you will have ample time to reflect upon the folly of contending with me!" Van Rensselaer exclaimed, in triumph.

"Easy as falling off a log, ain't it?" Bright asked, with a good-humored smile upon his bronzed features. "But, David, my boy, to use the old expression, that chicken won't fight. That bit of paper was indorsed by Royal Keene. Good; I won't dispute that fact; but now, just prove if you can that I am Royal Keene."

Van Rensselaer saw at a glance the strength of the other's position, and his face clouded over again.

"Three years have changed me greatly," continued the Californian. "James Bright, the Californian detective, doesn't look much like Royal Keene, the drunken Tombs lawyer. Any good legal gentleman will tell



"Now I tell you what I do; you introduce me, and I gifes you nice diamond ring."

you that the identity question is a very difficult one to handle sometimes. Besides, three years have elapsed since the little bit of paper that we speak of saw the light; that complicates the case a little. In regard to the identity question, of course, between ourselves, now that no witnesses are by, except the four walls that surround us, I frankly confess that I am the man, but at the same time defy you to prove it."

"Time will show, sir, which of us holds the winning hand," returned Van Rensselaer, fiercely.

"Co-rect," said the Californian, in his off-hand, easy way. "And now that I have delivered my cartel, that you are in possession of the fact that the war between us is to the death, I will take my departure. Be on your guard, for I shall commence operations at once. Adieu."

And with graceful, easy politeness, the cool, careless stranger bowed himself out of the apartment.

Van Rensselaer remained for a few moments silent in thought. He paced slowly up and down the room. The sudden and unexpected appearance of the man who he supposed had perished in the flames of the burning house three years before, was an event calculated to interfere materially with his plans. Then the thought of the old savant from India, who carried with him the missing will, came into Van Rensselaer's mind.

"If this fellow, by any strange accident, should learn of the existence of the will," he murmured, "then, indeed, he might be able to strike a blow at me which would require all my skill to parry. I must act promptly. No time is to be lost. I need an agent in this matter, for it will not do for me to appear at all in the affair."

Van Rensselaer caressed the ends of his silken mustache, reflectively. Suddenly his gloomy face lighted up.

"I have the very man!" he muttered.

"Tom Bishop! He, evidently, lives by his wits; a cool, shrewd fellow I should judge from what I have seen of him; the very man for my purpose."

Van Rensselaer glanced at his watch.

"Twenty minutes past ten. Just about the time to catch him on Broadway. I have noticed him standing in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel at this hour a dozen times or so. I may as well hunt him up at once. And now, Mr. Royal Keene, we shall see who will win in the struggle that is fated to take place between us."

Van Rensselaer procured his hat and gloves, and left the house.

He took his way down the avenue.

As he had anticipated, in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel he saw the man he was in search of.

Tom Bishop was a man of thirty, about the medium height, with jet-black hair, cut tight to his head, and a mustache, which in color and stiffness resembled the bristles of a blacking-brush. There was something of the air of the well-known class, generally termed "Bowery Boys," about Mr. Bishop; what a newsboy would term "galls." The New York "slang" is very expressive sometimes.

Bishop was dressed in style, sported his yellow kids and his dainty cane, yet, as Van Rensselaer had remarked, he evidently lived by his wits, as no one of his acquaintance had ever heard him speak of following any occupation.

Where he lived was also as great a mystery as how he lived. During the daytime, after ten A. M., he was generally to be found either in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel or lounging carelessly up and down Broadway. At night the theater lobbies and the various club-rooms—gambling-hells—of Broadway and the up-town cross-streets were graced by his presence.

Then, every once in a while, for a week or a month at a time, Mr. Bishop would suddenly disappear, and then again as suddenly reappear.

Where he went to or what he did no one knew.

Mr. Bishop had quite an extensive list of acquaintances. He was a jolly, good-natured fellow, always flush with money, and not afraid to spend it; consequently his so-

ciety was rather sought after by the young gentlemen desirous of seeing city life in all its various aspects.

Of course it was whispered that Mr. Bishop was a "sport," by which title the world knows the men who run gambling-houses, bet on horse-races and kindred affairs; but no one could say, of their own personal knowledge, that they knew of any thing discreditable to Mr. Bishop's character.

Such was the man whom Van Rensselaer was in search of; whom he desired to use as an instrument to further his own ends.

Van Rensselaer nodded to Bishop as he approached, and extended his hand in greeting, somewhat to that gentleman's astonishment.

### CHAPTER V.

#### LAYING THE SNARE.

"GOOD-MORNING," Van Rensselaer said, shaking the hand of the other cordially.

"Good-morning," replied Bishop, evidently amazed at the warm manner of the other.

"Didn't see you about last night."

"No; I had a little business to attend to."

"Ah, that reminds me, I've got a little bit of business that I want to talk to you about. If you have nothing better to do, join me in a stroll down Twenty-third street and I will explain matters."

"All right, I'm agreeable," Bishop replied, tersely, and the two left the front of the hotel and turned down Twenty-third street.

"Now, we will begin right at the beginning," Van Rensselaer said, commencing the conversation; "there is nothing like speaking plainly. Is a hundred dollars of any service to you?"

"Not to be sneezed at," replied Bishop, who perceived the drift of the question on the instant.

"Good; now I'll come to the point at once. There is a certain matter which concerns me greatly and which I can not at-

tend to in person. I want some one to look after my interests, and I thought, possibly, I might be able to come to some arrangement with you in regard to the matter. Of course I suppose that it is hardly necessary for me to say that the affair is a very delicate one and must be handled carefully."

Bishop nodded intelligently.

"I don't think that my lawyer could attend to it, nor my doctor. It requires a cool, experienced man of the world."

"Yes, I think that I understand; when you say, 'man of the world,' you mean a fellow up to all sorts of rascality?"

"Exactly."

"I think you've come to the right shop, then," the New Yorker said, complacently; "there isn't much going on in this little town that I ain't up to."

"That is what I thought. Of course this thing must be kept secret."

"Oh, of course; never do to tell tales out of school, you know."

"I will explain all the particulars. A certain party is coming to New York. When that party arrives in New York, I want him induced to go some place where he can drink something that will put him to sleep for ten or fifteen minutes; nothing to endanger his life of course."

"I understand," Bishop said, winking knowingly.

"Do you know of any place where he can be taken, and will you take him there?"

"There's the whole affair in a nutshell."

"Well," Bishop said, reflectively, "this requires a little consideration. What sort of a man is he? young?"

"No, old," Van Rensselaer said; "a man who has spent the best part of his life in India."

"Do you think that he would be apt to be up to our city tricks?"

"Hardly."

"When will he arrive?"

"Wednesday afternoon."

"Wednesday afternoon," repeated Bishop, thoughtfully; "let me see, says the blind man. Wednesday night there's a grand masquerade ball at the Academy of Music. Now, if I could induce him to go there and then get some pretty woman to fascinate him and fool him into going with her, I know a place where we could fix him without any trouble."

"But the woman?" Van Rensselaer said, slowly.

"It is not wise to trust a secret like this to the keeping of such a woman as we shall have to employ."

"There's just where the shoe pinches!" Bishop exclaimed.

A sudden thought occurred to Van Rensselaer.

"Where is the place to which you thought of taking the party?"

"John Allen's dance-house, in Water street. We can have a hack all ready. The old fellow will never know where he is going, nor the woman either for that matter."

"She need not know," Van Rensselaer repeated, thoughtfully; "that is true. I know a woman whom I can trust to serve as a decoy duck. I shall not let her know any of the details of the plan, nor in fact any thing of it. I have thought of an idea that will blind her eyes as to our purpose. Now then, you must meet the old man at the depot, so that you will be able to pick him out of the crowd. I'll think of some excuse for my absence."

Slowly the two walked onward, arranging the details of their plan.

Van Rensselaer's face was bright and his eyes glistened as he plotted the destruction of the precious paper that the old savant from India was bringing. The wily David would not have felt so secure of triumph had he known that, when he accosted Bishop in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, from one of the windows of the reading-room, the Californian detective beheld the meeting.

Leaving the two plotters to pursue their way down Twenty-third street, we will return to Broadway, the great artery of New York.

We will follow the great life-stream down the famous street of the New World.

Past Union Square, down the crowded thoroughfare till we pause in front of the new City Court House, that famous pile which has been slowly rising upward since the memory of the modern New Yorker runs backward and which is not yet completed.

Just in front of the square two men had halted and had clasped hands.

Two men, strong contrast each to the other.

One, a German Jew by birth, a short, thick-set, portly man of fifty, with little keen black eyes, a hooked nose and a bearded chin, clad in a suit of black broadcloth. A beautiful solitary diamond glistened on his immaculate shirt-bosom, and a heavy cluster diamond ring adorned his little finger. A jolly, contented-looking gentleman was he; one evidently used to good living, and at peace with himself and all the world.

The other was a tall, thin person, with a thin face, shrewd gray eyes and sandy-colored hair, dressed carelessly in a dark-gray suit, and wearing a little soft felt hat, pulled down over his forehead.

The first of the two was the well-known Broadway diamond broker, Isaac Abrams; the second, the equally well-known light of the Bohemian world, Joe Howard, the writer—a gentleman who delighted in describing life in glowing colors, and whose ready pen was never restrained by the prosaic hand of truth.



"Ah, my dear, how you was all the time, eh?" exclaimed the broker, in his jolly, cordial way.

"Lively; how do you flourish?" the reporter said.

"I sh putty well. Ah, mine goot friend, I hafe got one leetle question to put to you. You know Mademoiselle Heloise, the danseuse?"

"Of course; I'm a particular friend of hers," Oward replied.

"So s'helf me Isaac! you newspaper fellows knows everybody!" the German cried, with uplifted hands. "I say, I want an introduction to the lady."

"Certainly," the reporter poked the broker playfully in the ribs.

"She pretty girl, I go to the theater every night; I like fun," Abrams replied. "Now I tells you what I do; you introduce me, and I gifes you nice diamond ring; sparkles so that it puts your eye out."

"It's a bargain; shake," said Oward, laconically.

"Dat ish goot. Oh!" exclaimed Abrams, suddenly. "I hafe von little crow to pick with you. The next time you write what you call a sensation article about the diamond brokers on Broadway, you leaves me out, eh? So s'helf me Isaac! all my friends come to me and say, 'You see the Police Gazette? It has a full description of you and of your place, and how you do business.' Dat is not right," and the worthy broker looked grieved, and shook his head sorrowfully.

"But I didn't mention any names; no one could guess who I meant," Oward replied, laughing.

"Yes, but you gifes a full description of me; you speaks of mine beard; you say I go to the theater every night; den you speaks of mine nose. So s'helf me Isaac, you put my picture in next!"

"Oh I shan't go as far as to do that."

"Lish no joke. I always treats you well."

"Yes, but I did you justice. I said that you were an honest broker, and one of the most liberal brokers on Broadway."

"Dat ish truth!" exclaimed the German, proudly. "I always gif half as much as a thing is worth, and never charge more than five hundred per shent interest. You don't put me in the paper no more, eh?"

"No, that's honest," Oward replied; "but I say, Abrams, if you want an introduction to Mademoiselle Heloise, come to the masquerade ball at the Academy of Music, Wednesday evening. She will be there, and you shall have your introduction."

"Dat ish all right; you ish a putty goot fellow, but you don't put me in de newspaper no more; good-morning," and the broker waddled onward, while the newspaper man continued his walk up-town.

#### CHAPTER VI.

##### THE OFFER.

KATIE sprang to her feet the moment the door closed behind the servant.

"I had better go, dear," she said; "remember my warning about Mr. Van Rensselaer. You're a dear, good little woman yourself, but you musn't imagine that everybody else is like you."

"I shan't forget, and I shall speak to Mr. Van Rensselaer very plainly," the actress replied, in her quiet way.

"That's right!" cried Katie, impulsively; "I confess I don't like him a bit. He's one of these proud fellows who seems to imagine that, because he's got a little money, he's a great deal better than any one else. Well, I'll run away, so that you can see your visitor. By-by!" and the light-hearted little girl hastened away.

Coralie remained for a few moments silent in thought; then she rose and descended to the little parlor of the boarding-house, where she found David Van Rensselaer awaiting her.

He rose at her approach, and bowed in his usual courtly way.

"Mr. Van Rensselaer," the girl said, and in the three words she contrived to throw such an expression of scornful wonder that it cut the cool and impassive gentleman to the quick. A hot flush came over his face, and his lips quivered as he spoke.

"You are doubtless astonished at my visit; permit me to explain," he said, quite humbly.

"You have deeply wronged me, sir, and I do not think that you will be able to explain that," Coralie replied, in cold contempt.

"I wrong you?" Van Rensselaer said, in confusion.

"Yes."

"How?"

"You have boasted among your friends of your intimacy with the actress. Like a coward, you spoke falsely. I have no father, no brother to defend me, and you have tarnished the good name which, actress as I am, I prize dearer than life."

The pale cheeks of the girl were flushed crimson with hot blood as she spoke.

Van Rensselaer bit his lip; his eyes were cast upon the ground, and his face was pale. Scidom in his life had he heard such bitter, cutting words.

"Coralie," he said, gently, and after quite a long pause, "I fear that some one has defamed me. True, I have spoken of you; mentioned, with some little pride, I confess, that I was honored with your friendship, but I have never boasted of that friendship. I value it too highly to do that. To prove to you how sincere I am in what I say, I now offer you my hand and heart. I shall be only too proud to make you my wife."

The girl looked at her suitor for a moment in wonder. She was not prepared for such an offer.

"You make me your wife?" she said, slowly. "You forget how different are our stations in life. Your wealthy friends would laugh at you for marrying the actress, the woman who works for her bread with both hands and brain."

"Coralie, I care very little for the world's opinion regarding my acts," Van Rensselaer replied. "Besides, the opinion of the world regarding those who follow the stage for a living has changed greatly within the last few years. There is no disgrace in honest labor. Think what a position my love can give you. I come of one of the old New York families, of as good blood as can be found in America. Wealth, social station, all shall be yours. No longer will it be a struggle for you against the world, but ease, rest, affluence. Perhaps you may answer that you do not love me; but I am sure that you like me, and in time the love may come."

"Do you know the story of my life?" the girl asked.

"No."

"Listen to it; then you will be able to decide whether I can accept your love or not."

"Sit down, and I will listen."

Van Rensselaer placed a chair by the window for the girl, then brought another for himself, and sat down by her side.

"Go on," he said.

"Three years ago a poor girl made a living selling fruit in the streets of this city. She was exposed to both insult and temptation. She was friendless, alone. One day, in front of the Tombs, in Center street, a man dared to insult her. A stranger standing by interfered, and with a single blow rescued her. From that time, that stranger, who was only a poor wretched outcast like herself, befriended her. She learned to love him, for she saw that, despite his vices, he had a noble heart. One night the two, both alone in the world, both friendless, came to an understanding. Two hours afterward, standing together, watching a rude house blazing in flames, the girl was struck by a falling brick and hurled senseless to the earth. When she recovered, she found herself in the hospital. There Heaven took pity on the orphan, and sent a friend to aid her. One of the doctors, an old, gray-haired man, all alone in the world, felt compassion for the friendless girl. She told him her simple story, and, at the end of the three months, when she left the hospital, he offered to provide for her until she could choose a path in life, and by her own exertions gain her bread. A happy thought induced the girl to try the stage. Her second father had influence with one of the leading managers, and so secured her a chance to try whether she had talent for acting or not. The attempt was made, and she succeeded. Her after-career you know."

"And the man whom she once loved?"

The girl shook her head.

"You do not know whether he is alive or dead?"

"No."

"The chances there are ten to one that he is dead, or he would long since have come forward to claim you."

"But I have changed my name. Doctor Warne did not think that my own was a suitable one for the new life that I chose, and so he re-baptized me as Coralie York."

"And your true name?"

"Susan Wilson."

"Not quite as pretty a name as the other," Van Rensselaer said, smiling. "Well, I have heard your story, and now I wait my answer."

"But I do not love you, although I will freely confess that I like you. There is something which bids me like you, despite myself. I can not tell what it is; I only know that the feeling exists."

"And in time that may grow into love."

"Perhaps so," the girl said, doubtfully.

"I am willing to risk it if you are."

"Give me three days to decide," the girl said, slowly.

"That is a bargain," he cried, quickly; "and now, Coralie, that I stand almost in the light of an accepted lover, I have a favor to ask of you."

"A favor? What is it?"

"You know that there is going to be a grand masquerade ball at the Academy of Music, next Wednesday evening?"

"Yes."

"Are you going?"

"I think not—I have not really decided yet."

"I wish, you would go, and allow me to act as your escort. I have a little scheme to put into execution wherein I need your aid. That is the favor I would ask."

"Why, what do you wish me to do?"

"There is an old friend of my father coming to town; he is to visit the masquerade, and I have laid a wager with a friend of mine that, at the ball, I will induce him to leave it and go to this friend's house. The gentleman is a queer fellow, full of odd whims and totally unsocial to society, having spent the better part of his life in the jungles of India. You can use any device you please. It is only a simple masquerading joke. I will be by your side throughout the whole affair."

"Well, I will go, but I won't promise to aid you in this jest until I see the gentleman," the girl said, slowly.

"There's no harm in it, I assure you!" Van Rensselaer exclaimed, earnestly; "but you shall see for yourself. I will come for you in a carriage about nine. What disguise will you wear?"

"Nothing but my black water-proof cloak, that covers me completely."

"Excellent; and now, Coralie, I will bid you good-by. Remember, I leave my fate in your hands," Van Rensselaer rose to go.

"You do not fear, then, the other love which I have confessed is in my heart?"

"Not a whit," he replied, gayly; "what have I to do with the dead past? It is with the living future that we must deal. Adieu."

Coralie accompanied him to the door, and Van Rensselaer descended the steps with a light heart.

A smile of triumph was on his handsome face as he walked up the street.

"She will snap up the bait, like a hungry trout the unwary fly that hovers too near the surface of the stream. Make her my wife!" and his lip curled in scorn. "Oh, no! I have other views than that, my ambitious little woman. 'Twas necessary to use some device to entrap her into serving my purpose at this masquerade, and that is as good as any. Now, if I can wrest the will from the hands of the old savant, I can laugh at this fellow, Keene, and his threats. Find the heir! there, too, I defy him!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 119.)

Illness.—There is no good reason why every father and mother of a family should not be capable of dealing with all the lesser ailments to which their children are liable. For example, it is perfectly easy to ascertain whether a child is suffering from fever, by observing the tongue, the lips, and the pulse, and any person of ordinary intelligence should know what to do in such a case. There are doctors who will continue to make a mystery of disease so long as people are ignorant of the most elementary conditions of health and sickness. In any case they must have their own way. One practical hint, however, may be given to young mothers. When your child is ill, and the doctor is sent for, observe carefully his proceedings. If, watch in hand, he feel the sufferer's pulse, ask him how he forms his opinion, and go through the process after him. In this way a large amount of valuable knowledge may be gained.

#### DO THE BEST YOU CAN.

BY ALLA LEFFEL.

When storms appear and raging wild  
With winds assail your soul,  
And adverse darkness wickedly  
Your boldest schemes control,  
Do not despairing ever be,  
But act yourself a man;  
When things appear not as you would,  
Why, do the best you can.

And when your castle reared with joy  
Falls tottering to the ground,  
Let not its fall your hopes destroy,  
Nor your achieving wound;  
Rebuild again, and stronger build,  
And strive and be a man!  
When things appear not as you would,  
Why, do the best you can.

#### HAWKEYE HARRY, THE Young Trapper Ranger:

OR,  
THE MYSTERY OF THE WOOD.

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF THE "BOY SPY," "BOY CHIEF," ETC.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### A FEARFUL MOMENT.

DEATH stared the two fugitives in the face—death by the flames. They could not flee; the water was beneath them, and the reeds around them. Oh, it was awful thus to perish. All the terrors of a lifetime were compressed into a moment's duration. And the fire! It was a sight as grand as terrible, and with blanched face and glaring eyes, Hawkeye Harry sat and gazed upon the red wave that would soon envelop him and the fair being at his side.

"Oh, Harry! we will perish!"

The maiden's words started the youth from his stupor, and, as he gazed down into her face, now appearing ghastly in the lurid light, and saw her nestling closer to him, as if for protection, his manhood was aroused, and his usually quick inventive mind put to a terrible test.

He gazed quickly around. There was no possible chance of escape, but something must be done. His eyes fell upon Nora's shawl. Seizing it, he plunged it into the water, at the same time bidding Nora to throw herself in the bottom of the canoe.

The half-terrified maiden quickly obeyed, and the next moment she felt the wet shawl thrown over her form. She saw the youth's object—it was to save her.

"This is your only salvation, Nora," he said, as he plunged into the water, grasping several handfuls of moss that lay upon the surface of the water, and dragging it into the canoe in great flakes, he spread it over the maiden, also permitting it to trail over each rim of the canoe to protect its sides from the flames.

The poor girl found herself unable to move under her wet, dripping cover of shawl and moss.

Setting his rifle in one end of the canoe, the youth bade Nora not to attempt to remove her protection until the fire had ceased, then he sprang into the bayou and hastened to secure himself.

On rolled the billow of flame, that gathered strength and volume as it advanced. Close to the water's surface the dry reeds were shaven by the flame, which swept all before it like a scythe. No smoke hovered over the fire's trail. The wind drove it on, in advance of the flame. Behind the fire, the water was black with ashes and studded with a million tiny sparks that lingered upon the burnt stubs near the surface of the water only for a moment, then died out, leaving the darkness unbroken.

Close upon the fiery heel of the flame crept three canoes. Their occupants were savages—ten in number.

A light of fiendish triumph glowed in the small, basilisk eyes of that ten; and their half-nude forms and painted faces made them appear grotesque and demon-like in the glare of the burning reeds.

Eagerly they glanced over the surface of the water, where it had been cleared of reeds, for the canoe, or writhing forms of their hidden enemy.

Suddenly a cry of joy burst from their lips. The flames swept by a canoe that lay rocking like a cradle upon the surface of the water.

Like arrows the canoes of the savage fiends shot toward the little stranger-craft. The fire alongside of it ere the fire was ten feet away. Eagerly they gazed within it. No sign of life was there. But in the front of the canoe reclined a rifle, whose barrel was glimmering with heat, and in the canoe and over its sides was a heap of moss, smoking with heat and steam.

Gray Hawk, second in rank to Black Buffalo, and his warriors sat motionless for several minutes, and gazed, in astonishment and baffled triumph, around them.

Where was the enemy that they had expected to find? They had not escaped from the reeds, for warriors had been posted all around the bayou.

Again the chief fixed his eyes upon the canoe and steaming moss, as though loth to believe that an enemy was not in it. Then, reaching out, he took hold of the moss and began dragging it out.

Little by little the warm and wet mass was removed from the craft and thrown overboard.

As the last of the moss was taken away a cry of surprise burst from the chief's lips. In the bottom of the canoe appeared the outlines of a human form wrapped in a red blanket or shawl.

Among the savages was the outlaw guide, Ulric Dubois, who had joined the Indians shortly after dark, having come directly from the camp of Henri Roche, with the captain's message to Black Buffalo, who, with most of his warriors had set off for his village, leaving Gray Hawk to continue the search for the maiden and Hawkeye. Dubois had remained to assist in the search, and no sooner did his eyes fall upon the red object in the canoe than he recognized it as the crimson shawl of Nora Gardette.

He at once reached out and pulled it away, and there, in the bottom of the canoe, they saw a prostrate and motionless form.

"It's her!" cried Dubois. "It's the girl, Gray Hawk, that the damned boy stole from our wagon."

"Waugh!" exclaimed the chief; "she's dead!"

"I believe not, chief," returned Dubois; "she was wet, protected. The flames couldn't get to her through that moss and shawl, and both soaked wet. Lift her up, chief; lift her up!"

Gray Hawk sprang into the canoe and raised the motionless form in his arms.

A cry burst from his lips. She was not dead—the flame had not touched her, so

swiftly did it pass by. She had swooned, no doubt, from partial suffocation and fear. The chief dipped some water in the hollow of his hand and dashed it into her face while Dubois produced a small flask of brandy, and poured a few drops of the liquid between her lips.

Signs of returning consciousness were at once made manifest, by a slight convulsion of the body.

But where, now, was young Hawkeye? Did not Henri Roche charge Black Buffalo to capture him at all hazards? The daring lad had been in the reeds, and had secured Nora before he left. This they knew beyond the shadow of a doubt, for Dubois recognized the rifle found with the maiden, as the same Hawkeye Harry had in his possession the night he came to their encampment on the prairie.

"Let my warriors search for Hawkeye," said the chief. "He is not far away. His hands laid the green moss over the maiden before he left. He is cunning as the fox, and is hard to kill. If he was cunning enough to save the maiden's life, he would not fail to save his own."

By this time the fire had reached the northern extremity of the bayou and was dying out. But in obedience to their chief's command, the warriors searched the bayou over for the young trapper, but their search was in vain. And at last, when the light of the burning reeds died out, they turned their canoes and struck for their encampment on the river bank.

Slowly Nora Gardette came back to life, and when she had fully regained consciousness, she found herself upon a couch of blankets and skins before a glowing fire.

In trying to collect her bewildered thoughts and recall her situation, her mind reverted to Hawkeye Harry, and, uttering a low cry, she sprang to her feet.

A heavy hand was laid upon her arm, and a voice said, in a deep, guttural tone: "Let the pale-face maiden rest easy. She can not escape. She is in the power and the camp of Gray Hawk."

With flashing eyes Nora turned upon the savage. She saw her situation in a moment, but she did not give way under it. Scorn, defiance and indignation seemed to have gained complete ascendancy over her womanly fears and gentler emotions, the instant the savage spoke. She was surprised, herself, that she possessed so much courage and intrepidity.

For a moment she stood and faced the chief—faced him until he was compelled to shrink away; then her eyes turned and scanned each form around her with a look that spoke plainer than words.

Then Hawkeye Harry was not there. Had he escaped the flames? She felt that he had, and a silent prayer of joy and thankfulness came up from her young heart.

In her inquiring glances and the faint smile that came to her lips, Gray Hawk seemed to have read the maiden's thought and emotions.

"You need not look for the young Hawkeye around our camp fire. His body lies yonder in the bayou, and his scalp hangs at the girdle of Gray Hawk," and with a glow of hellish triumph upon his broad, painted, sensual face, he tapped, with his finger, a reeking scalp-lock that hung at his girdle.

But it was the last falsehood that Gray Hawk was destined to utter, for the next moment he uttered a low cry, and fell dead at the feet of the maiden!

#### CHAPTER XV.

##### ON THE TRAIL.

At an early hour on the morning following the night of events at the bayou, a party of horsemen broke camp on the great prairie many miles south of Boyer lake.

They were white men, and with a few exceptions were dressed alike—in the uniform of the United States Dragoons. They were well armed and mounted upon animals that showed they had been hard pressed.

At the head of the company, with long, regular and rapid strides, a man dressed in a suit of buck-skin guided the soldiers. His eyes sought the ground before him in a steady gaze, for he was following the wagon trail of Henri Roche.

In the rear of the company rode two persons whose garbs told they were civilians, and, judging from appearance, they were men unused to the exposure and hardships of the frontier. In fact this was the case. The eldest of the two was Calvin Gardette, the father of Nora. The other was a nephew of Mr. Gardette's, and a devoted aspirant to his cousin Nora's hand.

Richard Parker—this was the young man's name—had accompanied Nora and her father from Ohio to the fort, where they had been stopping with Major Gardette, Nora's brother. And when it was known that Nora was gone, Richard was the first to volunteer his services to penetrate the Indian country in search of her. The father had no objections to his attentions to his daughter, for he saw that the latter did not reciprocate his devotion beyond the bounds of an intimate friendship.

Richard was young—scarcely two-and-twenty—of an impulsive and enthusiastic nature, a free and dashing spirit.

"What think you, uncle?" he asked, as they rode along, "has that wagon-track been made within the last two days?"

"It certainly has, Dick," returned Mr. Gardette; "at least, our guide and scout say so, and they are versed in such matters."

"If so, we may come up with the enemy, be they Indians or white men, before night."

"Yes," replied Mr. Gardette; "but we may find then that we are following the trail of a party of honest traders. However, Lubin, the scout, is satisfied that the party we are following have got Nora. You know he figured the whole matter out very closely, and believes the abduction was arranged between a party of outlaws and the running scout, Ulric Dubois, who is now the hat in the river, and the edge of the bank crumbled off, and not her body, satisfied Lubin that she had been abducted, and these marks—the hat and crumbled banks—left to keep down suspicion of the facts. And from the course taken by the party after leaving the motte, where we just broke camp, the scout expressed fears that they were heading for old Rat Rouge's robber-den. If so, I fear I will never see my poor child again."

"Well, uncle, we will soon know if their trail is as plain all the way as along here."

"But, Dick, we may soon expect to have other dangers to encounter. The scout says we are getting into the Indian country now."

Here the conversation ended for the

time, and the party moved on in silence, reaching the Boyer river a few minutes before sunset. Here the party went into camp.

In gazing around him for a suitable spot for a camp-fire, a cry of surprise suddenly burst from the lips of Lubin, the scout.

"What now, Lubin?" asked the lieutenant of the dragoons.

"The wagon-trail ends on this blessed spot, and that's what the rascals had their camp-fire," replied Lubin, pointing to a heap of ashes.

"All saw that Lubin was correct in his statement; but the scout, not satisfied with this discovery, advanced, and with his moccasined feet scattered the ashes.

"By Jehoko! I see into it now!" he exclaimed; "the white rascals hev burnt their wagon up onto this very spot. Here's some o' the nails that says so."

"But where are the other irons? Surely they didn't burn them up," said a dragoon.

"No, but I'll bet ye'll find 'em in the river if ye'll jist take the trouble to look—See here!"

The scout picked out of the ashes several nails and screws, which satisfied every one that the wagon had been burned there, and the party had taken either to the river or horseback.

While the pursuers were busy in picking their animals to grass, and otherwise preparing for the night, Lubin was noticed to be very busy about the remnant of the camp-fire, and presently he announced another discovery.

He found that the ground under the ashes was broken and loose, and he was satisfied that the outlaws, if such they were, had buried something there, and to conceal the spot, had burned the wagon over it.

In a few moments, half a dozen men were upon their knees removing the dirt from the spot with their hands.

Down two feet from the surface of the ground they came to a wooden chest, bound with straps of iron.

Great excitement prevailed, and some of the party could scarcely wait until the chest was unearthed before they began forcing it open; this was accomplished, however, and then another excitement prevailed over the contents, which were quite numerous.

The first article taken from the chest was a map of the territory—nothing more. Then came a number of letters, all of which had been addressed to Henri Roche, and were written in cipher. Two or three of recent date were signed "U. D.," which all believed stood for Ulric Dubois, the *deserted* scout of the fort.

In the bottom of the box were found plates, engravers' tools, various colored inks, and, in fact, everything required by a band of successful counterfeiters and thieves.

This satisfied our friends that the party they were following was some of Rougel's robbers. Calvin Gardette groaned in spirit when he thought how probable it was that Nora was in the villains' power. He was anxious to move on that night, but his desire was overruled by Lubin, who informed him that it would not only be impossible to follow a trail, but decidedly dangerous.

"Thar's Ingins about, I'm satisfied," the scout said, "and then I ain't well enuff 'quainted with these parts to foller a trail arter dark. Ye see, trallin', as a success, don't depend entirely on the plainness o' the trail, but one's knowledge o' the kentry, courses, creeks, and the dangers surroundin' 'em. Now, if we could run across a chap up in these diggin's called Hawkeye Harry, then we could travel day and night, for they say it's a positive fact that that boy can see jist as well in the dark as a cat."

"Where does he live?" asked one.

"Bout ten miles from here. He's a free ranger or trapper, and a bold leetle dare-devil he is, too. He kin skin a beaver or skulp a red-skin quicker than you can wink. He comes to the fort every onc't in a while to buy powder and shot, and sich like—Ab! what's that mean?"

The old scout's query was occasioned by the faint report of a rifle echoing through the woods and along the river.

"I reckon it's young Parker's rifle," said one; "he left camp soon after we halted to take a little hunt for deer or turkey."

True enough, Dick, as his uncle called him, was gone. In the excitement occasioned by the finding of the chest and its contents, all but the one man had failed to notice his absence.

"By Jehoko!" exclaimed Lubin, "I'd 'a' never let the younker left if I'd seed him startin'. Ten to one he'll git his ha' lifted afore he



The horseman turned, drew rein and gazed toward the party as though to make out who they were—whether friends or foes.

To enlighten him, the officer gave another blast upon the bugle, at the same time waving his cap above his head. Thereupon the horseman wheeled and galloped toward them.

When he was within a few rods of the party, old Lubin gave a shout of joy; then turning to his friends, said:

"Boys, we're in luck. That feller is Hawkeye Harry, the Boy Ranger."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## WHO WERE THEY?

BEFORE Old Optic could have time to fire upon Clouded Heart, Red Wing, who was standing by, struck up the muzzle of his gun, and the bullet whistled high above the masked stranger's head.

The old trapper quickly confronted the chief and demanded an explanation of his act.

"Would you slay a friend?" asked the chief.

"No!" retorted the trapper; "but I would slay an enemy. Didn't you see him makin' signs to them Injuns comin' out there?"

"I saw him wave a red scarf, but look through the bushes, pale-face, and you can see that the approaching horsemen are not Indians."

"Not Indians!" exclaimed Old Optic, as he peered through the opening out onto the plain. "By heavens, you are right, Red Wing! It is a party of dragoons, and at their head I see that noble boy, Hawkeye Harry! Whoop! whoop! hurrah!" and the old trapper bounded through the undergrowth into the prairie, where he was met by Hawkeye Harry and the dragoons.

"Hullo, my young friend," exclaimed Optic; "you're still on foot, eh?"

"Yes; though I have had some pretty narrow escapes," replied the young ranger. "The red-skins got me into a bonyon last night, and tried to burn me out, and I only escaped by the skin of my teeth, just in time to sink a tomahawk into the brain of the Sioux chief, Gray Hawk. But what are you doing here, old friend?"

The youth dismounted as he asked the question, while Lubin, the dragoons and Mr. Gardette advanced and joined Red Wing and his warriors.

Old Optic briefly narrated all that had transpired under his observation since Harry had left the Cove, including the startling information of Clouded Heart.

"Then you're on your way to rescue your daughter?" said Harry, when he had heard the old trapper's sad story.

"Yes," replied the trapper.

"Then you can depend upon company and assistance, for these dragoons are going to the Sioux village to rescue the daughter of that elderly man on the white horse. I tell you, Optic, he is the father of the sweetest little woman I ever saw."

"Ah! oh, yes; certainly," laughed Old Optic. "But if she is a captive, how did you see her?"

The young ranger narrated his late adventures.

"And, Optic," he continued, "I'll rescue that girl if I lose my own life by the act."

"In love!" said the old trapper; "crazy in love! But, Harry, I want you to keep your eyes upon this masked stranger of whom I told you awhile ago. He calls himself Clouded Heart, and I must admit he is clouded in a great mystery."

"I'll do so, Optic. Now let us see what I can see of the stranger."

The two fellow-rangers joined the Indians and dragoons, who had entered upon terms of friendship and good feeling.

Clouded Heart stood aside by himself, and, as they advanced, Hawkeye Harry noticed that he fixed his glowing eyes upon the old trapper, with a steady gaze.

For a while he elicited much notice and curiosity from the soldiers and Mr. Gardette, but when they had learned of his sorrow through Old Optic, their attention became more of pity than curiosity.

A consultation was now held as to the proper course to pursue in rescuing the captives. The two parties had united their forces and were to act together thereafter.

They were now some ten miles from the Sioux village, and it was suggested by Hawkeye Harry that they remain in the timber until night, and then approach the enemy's stronghold under cover of darkness. The suggestion was no sooner advanced than acted upon, and in a few minutes the whole party had gone into a temporary encampment.

The day wore away quite slowly to some of the party, but by dusk every man was mounted and moving northward, guided by the young ranger and Lubin.

It was far in the night when a point on the prairie was reached, two miles from the Indian town. Here a halt was made for further consultation in regard to their course of action.

The suggestions advanced were many, and none but those of Hawkeye Harry and Red Wing coincided, and theirs was the one that all decided upon as the most likely to be attended with success.

They proposed to leave the horses with a strong guard, then steal forward on foot to the village, or close to it as they dare, without running into danger before they were prepared to meet it. If the warriors had all returned from their expedition, it was thought best not to make an attack upon the town until they had seen what could be accomplished in their favor by stratagem, the white man's first expedient.

The Indian town was located upon a small creek flowing from Lake Okibogie. To the north of it a steep, wooded bluff arose several hundred feet above the level of the valley, and extended down to the encampment, most of which was enfolded within the shadow of the woods. South of the village a long, treeless, shrubless plain rolled away in gentle undulations for many miles.

Hawkeye Harry and Red Wing took the lead toward the village. They crossed the creek a mile below the place, and after hours of toil reached a point in the woods, in the rear of the town.

A reconnaissance was now to be made, and the perilous job fell upon the Boy Ranger, Lubin, the scout, and Red Wing.

Leaving their friends, the three crept forward through the woods and soon gained a point on the hill, where they had a fair view of the town.

The hour was late, but there were many fires burning, and apparently every man, woman and child was astir.

"That's sumthin' up," whispered Lubin, "or the red imps would all be in bed."

"Yes, they have war-dance," said Red Wing.

"Yes, and they've got a white male prisoner, too," added Hawkeye. "Look, nigh that central lodge, tied to a post."

Lubin and the chief did as directed. At the same time a low exclamation burst from the lips of the old scout.

"By jinks!" he said, "that captive is Richard Parker! The boy wasn't killed, arter all."

"He is the young man that Mr. Gardette was speakin' of, eh?"

"Yes. Heard 'em say at the fort he war the lover o' Gardette's gal."

Harry started at this information. Was it possible that Nora had a lover? The thought was a bitter one.

For some time the trio sat and watched the Indians moving about, apparently preparing for some exciting event. What was it? Were they going to torture Parker?

If such was the intention, the idea was suddenly abandoned, for they saw the prisoner taken to a lodge and guards posted around it.

Hawkeye Harry strained his eyes in hopes of getting a glance of Nora, but he was disappointed.

But he did see among the Indians, moving about in perfect freedom, Henri Roche and his men.

Gradually the savages retired and the camp-fires died out, but, between them and the camp, our friends saw a number of wary guards pacing to and fro upon their beat.

Red Wing proposed making a sudden attack upon the village in the dark. But Harry and Lubin opposed such a bloody course. They knew that the Fox warriors were thirsting for Sioux blood, and, if once under way, an indiscriminate massacre was sure to be the result.

"No, no, Red Wing," said the youth; "I hate a Sioux as bad almost as you do, but I'd never consent to see your women and children murdered. And if we should attack them and meet with a repulse as I believe we would, then it would make matters worse. Let us be patient; but, bah! talk of patience to an Indian! But, boys, I've a plan in my head to rescue the prisoners, and if it should fail, nobody's scalp but my own would have to pay the forfeit."

"What is yer plan? let's hear it," said Lubin.

The young ranger made known his plan of action.

"Ten to one ye'll git tomahawked," said Lubin.

Red Wing was silent, which was proof that he did not approve of the youth's project.

"I know it's dangerous, friends, but, if I lose my scalp, it won't be a serious loss. All I ask is your assistance or presence on the other side of the creek."

"Never fear; we'll be there," said Red Wing.

"We'll be there," repeated Lubin.

And together the two heroes crept softly away, leaving Hawkeye Harry alone to nerve himself for the execution of his dangerous and fearless undertaking—all for the sake of Nora Gardette.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 116.)

## Madeleine's Marriage:

OR,  
THE HEIR OF BROADHURST.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLER.  
AUTHOR OF "UNDER THE CLOUD."

## CHAPTER XXXI.

## CONCLUSION.

"SELF-DENIAL is a beautiful thing; but I couldn't stand it any longer."

These were George's words as he saw the consequence of his interference to save his friend from being murdered. He scratched his head, and looked at Lewis with an air of piteous embarrassment.

Dorant bade him go instantly for the nearest surgeon.

He then requested young Duclos to conduct the ladies to their own house.

Madeleine objected to leaving him; but he assured her that both his enemies were incapable of harming him. "This is no place for you now," he said. "I will come to you presently."

Frank took especial care to secure his prisoner in such a way that it would not be possible for him to break loose. As soon as he had seen the ladies safely housed he went to the nearest police station, and was accompanied by an officer on his return. Into his charge he committed Hugh Rawd, whom he accused as the murderer of his father many years before.

Without even a murmur or a movement, Hugh submitted to be handcuffed and led away to prison. The game of hazard at which he had played was lost.

The surgeon declared life extinct in the wounded man. The pistol ball had penetrated his heart.

In a very short space of time the house was filled with the police and the neighbors.

The testimony of the two men who had witnessed the accident was sufficient to show that Lewis Dorant was in no way accessory to the death of Jasper Marritt. He was not even in a situation for self-defense, and would the next instant have been the victim, but for George's interference. That young man had simply tried to prevent the slaughter of his friend. No blame was attached to either of them.

The body was placed upon a table, and the coroner summoned to hold his inquest.

Dorant and young Duclos then went after their friends.

Madeleine and her daughter had not touched the dinner that stood in the dining-room. They were in the drawing-room without any light, silent and in sadness, but thankful in their hearts to the overruling Providence that had protected them in all their dangers, and had reunited those so long separated.

When the door-bell sounded, Madeleine started up in sudden alarm, uncertain what news it brought; her daughter following her and clasping her arm. Swift steps were heard ascending the stairs, and the next moment both were clasped in loving arms. They wept for the fate even of the persecutor, called so suddenly to his last account.

The coroner's inquest was held early in the morning; the verdict showing that an accident had caused the pistol in the hands of the deceased to go off, while struggling to free himself so that he could complete the crime he meditated.

His papers were taken possession of by the authorities; but nothing was found which threw light upon his antecedents. He

had always been careful not to retain any thing that could do so.

What money was found was sent to Mrs. Clermont, as she was still called. She refused to receive it, and at Dorant's suggestion it was given to the wretched man lying in prison, that he might either use it to make restitution, or to improve his own condition.

Hugh was brought up for examination, and on the testimony of Morell and Lewis Dorant, was fully committed for his trial for murder.

It may as well here be mentioned that a week before the trial was to come off, he managed to commit suicide in prison.

Madeleine was impatient to give up the state and splendor which were no longer hers; and as she wished herself to renounce them in favor of the rightful heir, her husband took her to the house in Montague street.

Albert Morell was recovering, though very weak, and looking haggard and exhausted. He was in all respects a changed man. To look back on the worse than wasted years of his life was horrible to him. Literally he "abhorred himself." With the humility of true penitence, he could not bear to see his wife working and denying herself for him. He watched her as she moved about the room in her household offices, or prepared his food, and execrated himself for having chained her to degradation.

What was he, that her young life should be blighted for him? But for the crimes that had made him a fugitive, she might have recovered her splendid voice and maintained herself and her son in luxury.

Not a word had come in reply to his letter to his uncle, submissive and repentant as it was. Albert was rather glad of that; for he could hardly have borne to receive gifts in consequence of his sincere acknowledgments.

Emily had been reading the Bible to him after her morning work was done. Her son had gone out to his ill-paid labors, having partaken the frugal breakfast of tea and bread. A little cold broth had been warmed up for the invalid.

His wife remarked that he was looking paler than usual. He stretched out his thin hand and laid it on hers.

"You are fading, Emily, while I am recruiting," he said, tenderly. "I have seen it since I began to mend."

She shook her head with a languid smile. "A little tired; that is all."

"Never caring for yourself; only for me, who have been the curse of your life."

"How can you speak so, Albert?" cried the wife, reproachfully.

"Have I not—from the beginning? I will own to you that, when I loved you first, I had no idea of making you my wife. I thought myself a gentleman, when I was only a blackguard; and looked on you as my fairer; I was deceived and betrayed! I heard you sing in London, I knew you had in you what would be a fortune to me, and then first I thought of you in earnest for a wife. Was I not a scamp for that?"

"You repented of that long ago," said Emily.

"Of my villainy; not of marrying you! Well, even after your failure at the opera, I saw that you might be successful in the concert-room. Marritt failed in his pursuit of you—you were struggling for a subsistence for yourself and the boy; I thought you had lost your chance of a respectable marriage, even to a tradesman, by the cloud that hung over you; the jealousy of that Italian woman closed the theater to you. I had begun to know myself for a villain; but I set my honorable birth against your sullied fame, and thought I offered odds when I made you another proposal of marriage."

"And so you did!" exclaimed the woman, covering her face. "But it was not my fault; I was deceived and betrayed! That villain had it in his power to right me, if he had chosen."

"I believe that, Emily; I do believe it!"

"You do? I am so glad to hear you say so!"

"I do; for you are not the woman to go astray, Emily. That villain—do I not know him for one?—could right you, as you say."

"Oh, if he would! If my boy—" She could not go on for tears.

"With I am well, I will see him. I can not bribe, but I can threaten him; for I hold his life in my hands. He shall be made to do you justice, Emily."

She pressed his hand gratefully.

"As I was saying: when I married you, I thought I was giving as much as I received. But I soon found out my mistake. The burden of my maintenance fell chiefly upon you. You sang at small concerts, taught music, and earned a decent subsistence, if I had not squandered it."

"Oh, Albert, do not go on."

"I can't see how worthless I was, and that you grew every day better and purer. How many years you bore with me! kept my faults out of sight, cherished what little good there was in me, received me when I was maddened with drink and beggared by gambling, and nursed me through troubles brought on me by ill company and ill courses. You showed yourself the angel, while I was a devil."

"You shall not go on, Albert."

"I have had your voice and your voice failed—have you ever reproached me?"

"I have had no cause!"

"You have made your child respect me; you have watched over me, borne with me, begged for me. I have known it all, Emily, and I have sworn to repay your goodness."

"Be silent, my husband!"

"I shall have the opportunity; I feel it in me that I shall. Better times are coming; and I shall be able to prove to you that I am not the wretch I have been. Better times, Emily—darling!"

He lifted her hand to his lips. She understood that his words referred to his expectations from his uncle Morell. She had long given up all hope of succor from that quarter.

But his words seemed a prophecy. There was a tap at the door, and the little girl of the house brought word that a lady and gentleman had called to inquire for Mrs. Morell and her son.

"Is it an old gentleman?" she asked, her thoughts reverting to the uncle.

"No, ma'am; not old nor young; but a fine-looking man. And such a beautiful lady!"

Unable to guess who were her visitors, Emily went down to meet them.

She recognized Madeleine at once. She had seen her at Broadhurst several times. She greeted her by name, wondering why she had come.

"Not Mrs. Clermont—but Mrs. Dorant," was the reply. "My husband"—and she presented him—"was saved from death; saved by your husband. Has he not told you the story?"

"He has not, madam."

"Then he must tell you. I am grateful to him—most grateful. He saved my Lewis; but it is only since yesterday that I knew he was living; only since last night."

Her voice faltered; but she presently recovered herself.

"And now I have it in my power to show my gratitude. My husband being alive cuts me off from the inheritance of Broadhurst, you know."

"I know," repeated Emily.

"Well, the estate is not going to the hospital, for the rightful heir is discovered." A bewildered stare was the comment on this sentence.

"The true and lawful heir is your son."

"My son?"

"Here are the papers; the marriage lines; the church register; the certificate of baptism; the letters."

A vivid flush kindled Emily's pale cheek as she took the pocket-book, and a wild gleam of joy shot from her eyes.

"Where did you get these?" she asked, hurriedly.

"They were taken by my husband from the house which he kept them so long; Hugh Rawd had them."

"I knew he had them! I knew it!" cried the poor woman, trembling with excess of emotion.

"He meant to sell his secret at a high price; or to marry you and have the property, as—"

She did not finish the sentence. Dorant understood why, though Emily did not.

"Yes!" she exclaimed; "he wanted to marry me! He urged it again that night when we thought Albert was dying."

"It was for the same purpose, but it pleased Heaven to baffle his evil designs. He is in prison, to be tried for the murder he committed many years ago. The papers were sent by my husband to me, and we have brought them to you."

"Oh, madam, how can I repay such goodness! My name—my boy's name—rescued from dishonor!"

"More than that: your son is the rightful heir of Broadhurst. You must take possession at once."

"My son—the heir?"

"Assuredly; you can prove him the lawful son of Edward Clermont. The will bequeathed all to him first; to me only in case Edward left no issue. No one can dispute your son's claim. I am ready to surrender everything."

"Oh, madam, how generous!"

"No; I am only just. Where is your son?"

"He has not come from his work. He will be here at one o'clock."

"Bring him to my—the house when he comes. There is the card with the address. Stay: the carriage shall be sent for you at half-past one, and I will summon the executors. Have you a solicitor?"

Emily shook her head.

"Then mine shall wait on you, if you please. Be sure to be ready. Now, Lewis, shall we go?"

As the visitors departed, the happy wife and mother flew up to her room with her joy unalloyed.

"I told you," Morell said, when all was revealed, "that better times were coming; but I did not know it would be through you, Emily. I am fated to be always your debtor."

The carriage came, and conveyed the young heir and his mother to the house known as "Mrs. Clermont's" in the neighborhood. The drawing-room was full of strangers. There were the executors and their lawyers and clerks, and there were the Dorant family and young Duclos, with Mr. and Mrs. Byrne. The latter had become anxious at the non-arrival of her friends at her house, or at Broadhurst, and had come up to London to see if anything was the matter.

It was her earnest advice that the decision about the property might be left in the hands of the court. It was folly and madness, she urged, for the incumbent to give up at once.

Madeleine remembered that her advice had been for her to marry Jasper Marritt when she hesitated to take the step. If she had followed her own impulses, how much suffering she would have escaped!

In spite of the advice of her solicitor, she refused to remain in the house, or to hold the property a day longer. She had been an ignorant usurper too long, she said; her marriage with Marritt being null and void, even if the heir had not been found. She and her daughter had already engaged lodgings, and would go into them that very afternoon.

After consultation, it was thought proper that Mr. and Mrs. Morell and the boy, whose claim to the estate was to be entered, should remove to the house immediately.

The cause was brought before the court as no opposition worth speaking of was offered—though the trustees of the hospital sent a solicitor to represent their interests—and as the proofs of a legal marriage and the boy's identity were indisputable, the decision was given in his favor.

Madeleine sincerely rejoiced in the triumph of justice. She and Oriel, with her husband, had taken plain rooms, where they could live frugally, and she was busily looking up pupils in music and drawing.

This was in opposition to the earnest entreaties of Frank Duclos, who had persuaded his affianced bride to fix the day for their wedding. He was anxious that her parents should live with them. This both Dorant and his wife had determined not to do. Just before the wedding the question was settled in a manner they had not anticipated.

An answer came at last to Albert Morell's appeal to his uncle. It was from the elder Morell's solicitor, and edged with black. His uncle had received his letter in time to send him his forgiveness and blessing. Albert was thankful that no more was given him.

The Dorants were astonished to receive a missive from the same legal gentleman at the same time. He informed Madeleine that by the last will and testament of the late Mr. Morell she was appointed sole heiress to all his property.

It was not the will made when she was his daughter, but one of a later date, made after his discovery of her innocence of the theft he had charged upon her. He had written her a letter to be forwarded with the intelligence of his death.

In this he implored her forgiveness for his mistake, and for the pride which had prevented a full atonement long before. It

would have been made, nevertheless, but for his knowledge that she had no need of his wealth. He begged her to accept now what he had to leave, and to remember him as a loving father.

Madeleine wept long over this letter.

She had scruples about receiving the fortune, but Albert refused to touch it. He was amply provided for, too, by his step-son. She appealed to Lewis, and he advised her acceptance of the good that had fallen to her lot.

So it came about that Oriel was married from a splendid house, in a fashionable locality, and that she brought her husband a rich dowry, in addition to her loveliness and worth.

The family were often visitors at Broadhurst. Prosperity did not tempt Albert again into evil ways. Nor did it mar the nobleness of character that had sustained Lewis Dorant in the depths of his adversity.

THE END.

## That Five-Dollar Bill.

BY J. B. HENLEY.

"SIR, if you please, boss would like you to pay this bill to-day," said a half-grown boy as he extended a piece of soiled and dirty paper toward a gentleman named Arnold, a lawyer, whose office was situated in a crowded business thoroughfare.

The attorney turned in his chair, stared at the boy, as though he was some newly-discovered specimen of zoology, gave a long whistle, drew his inky fingers from his pocket, and, stretching forth his hand, received the piece of worn and dirty paper, and daintily opening it, looked at its contents.

"So your master wishes me to settle this bill now, eh?" asked the man of briefs, as he finished the perusal of the paper.

"Yes, sir. This is the sixteenth time I've come for it, and I intend to keep coming till I get the money," answered the boy.

"You're an impudent hound."

"Can't help it. I'm always impudent to lawyers; it's catching."

"You've cut your eye-teeth, I see."

"You bet! Boss told me to tell you, if you don't pay that bill, he'll sue you."

"Sue me! I'm a lawyer."

"That makes no difference; he declares he'll do it; so fork over."

"Declares he'll sue me?"

"Yes, sir. True as Gospel."







## FAITHLESS.

BY DE KAL.

They tell us that time will down sorrow or pain—  
Heal wounds that naught else can approach;  
Some say that time will down sorrow or pain—  
But mine it can not in the slightest way touch.

Years upon years have passed drearily over,  
Bringing change after change in the scene,  
Still memory brooding in silence will hover  
Around the foul stain where her truth should have been.

She knows not nor dreams how the canker is eating,  
De-fying the faith that she was her stay;  
Oh, happier far e'er the day of our meeting,  
Had death torn one ill-fated victim away!

Oh, shame! is this manly—the soul quailing under  
The griefs of the past that can never return?  
Be calm! though the heaving heart open asunder—  
Remember how silent the savage can burn.

When in torture the flames lick his vitals and pierce  
The scorched, quivering flesh with such mad  
dancing throes—  
Prompting nature's wild scream by the agony  
Still he smiles in derision and mocks at his foes!

## Flying from Fate.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"It won't do—it won't do at all!" and then Pelatiah Mayfield replaced the huge clay pipe in his grizzled mustached mouth, and leaned meditatively back in the soft-cushioned rocker.

"What won't do, Pelatiah?—not that new pair of steers you don't mean?" It was a pleasant, half-questioning voice that came from farmer Mayfield's spinster sister, as she looked up with faded blue eyes from the immense pile of mending.

"I wish it was nothing" worse, Sary Ann; no, I was a-thinkin' about Octavia. I don't approve nobow of her doin's—her and that young Chris Winter's too friendly."

"Octavia and Chris Winter?" and Miss Mayfield repeated the names. "I'm sure I ain't seen none of it—but grantin' they be, Pelatiah, where's the harm?"

"Where's the harm, eh? Well, I can pretty quick tell you that my brother's child shain't never marry into the Winter family."

"I'm sure Chris is a likely enough sort o' feller—he ain't got no money, to be sure—"

"And Octavia Mayfield's got to gin up."

To-morrow she can pack up and go to her other uncle's—out there in California."

Then, with lengthening face, Miss Sarah Ann Mayfield listened to the plans of her brother, Pelatiah; plans that were sure to be effected, because Pelatiah desired it so to be; plans that would take bright, winsome Octavia out of the old farm-house, and leave it sunless and lonely. And all because pretty Octavia had fallen in love with handsome young Christian Winter.

Somehow, away down in her heart, spinster though she was, aunt Sarah Ann sympathized with Octavia; and the sight of her guileless happiness brought to mind the days of thirty years back, when Obed Green—a grandfather now—had brought home from singing-school on Wednesday nights.

Perhaps such memories, and her own gentle sympathy were the cause of the traces of tears on her face when Octavia came in, her brown, wavy hair trailing over her shoulders, all tangled and windblown, and her cheeks tinted like an oleander.

A graceful, queenly sort of girl despite the negligence of coiffure, with a fascinating way about her that few people—Chris Winter particularly—could withstand. A girl with deep violet eyes, that laughed when the red lips were close shut; with the most faultless of hands and arms.

Now, all fresh and breezy, with the taint of her pink percale dress thrown gracefully over her arm, Octavia Mayfield came gayly up the long room.

"Well, auntie, I've succeeded in getting a pattern for you—Why, auntie, what's the matter?"

Then, dropping half uneasily into the very chair uncle Pelatiah had so lately vacated, she listened to the trouble on aunt Sarah's dear old heart.

"Go to California! Of course I'll go to California! Why, you dear old goose you, it's just what I would like, above all things. Just think of it! I'll be back in about a year, with such a rich husband!" And her merry, mischievous laugh rung out like the clear notes of a silver bell.

"But—but—I thought Chris—"

"Oh, you've been worrying about poor Chris? Bless you, auntie, Chris don't care a wit for me—not a whit!"

Her tones were so care-free, so utterly indifferent, that aunt Sarah looked up in helpless amazement. She saw a face whose color was slightly heightened, and two small hands whose fingers were nervously lacing and interlacing; but, woman though she was, she did not see the pain in Octavia's eyes, or the faint white mark around her smiling lips.

She never dreamed of the lover's quarrel of ten minutes old; of the cold parting and the returned ring—and Octavia snatched hurriedly at the offer to go away from Christian Winter—away from herself if she could.

So, without a word to him, she sailed—for "the rich husband," as she laughingly promised uncle Pelatiah—while her lips quivered with sharp pain.

The October sunset cast its dainty red shades over the Pacific coast, where the waves lapped softly on the silver white beach, and crept to the very feet of a woman, fair as Undine herself, who stood there, idly gazing far over the tossing ocean.

A violet-eyed, queenly-looking woman, who was perhaps the more beautiful because of the everlasting look of unrest in those eyes, that lent such a pensive glory to her face.

Just now, she withdrew her face from toward the sea, and looked back the path she had just come; a slight flush crossed her statuesque cheek as she noted, walking rapidly toward her, a man, whose face was eager and anxious.

He came up to her, and without a preliminary word, took both her hands.

"Octavia! my answer—is it to be yes?"

"Then in a low, quiet voice, she answered him."

"If you are content, knowing that I have no love to give, Mr. Edgely—my hand is yours."

Royally as a queen extends her scepter, Octavia laid her cold fingers in his palm.

It seemed strange she could not give him the love he had so craved; he was a splendid-looking man, tall and commanding, with heavy mustache and beard that lent him an air of nobility. He was thoroughly the gentleman too, and what, of all his graces

that had attracted Octavia enough to permit him to become a recognized suitor, was the occasional similarity in his manner to Christian Winter.

Poor Chris! they had parted so angrily. Had he fulfilled his lusty vow of disdaining ever to sue for another woman's love, as she had kept her vow of securing a rich husband, since love was so deceitful?

For Mr. Edgely was rich—very rich; and Octavia wrote home to the farm-house about it.

"It does seem such a pity, after all, Octavia, that your uncle Pelatiah was so hasty. That Mr. Chris Winter has come into a splendid fortune, they say, since he left her about. And I b'ieve I heard Melody Johnson say he was comin' home about now."

Octavia leaned languidly back in the same old cushioned rocker, and listened to aunt Sarah Ann's endless flow of gossip.

"Chris Winter?" It was nothing but Chris Winter now. Even uncle Pelatiah himself had changed his mind, and grumbled whenever Octavia mentioned Mr. Edgely, which was, to tell the truth, quite seldom.

Then, one morning, when she sat reading a letter from her betrothed, that announced his intention of coming East at once, to be in season for their marriage, aunt Sarah Ann came rushing in, with a gentleman at her heels.

"Octavia! Octavia! if here ain't Chris Winter, come to congratulate you!"

Then she rushed out, and left them face to face.

For a moment Octavia felt herself growing powerless before him; her eyes grew dim, and her head reeled. But, he extended his hands and grasped hers in a warm, almost passionate clasp.

"Octavia—I can't—I won't believe you are to be another's! My darling, I never can let you go again!"

He was kissing her over and over, on lips and brow; and she, in a delirium of joy, only knew it was Christian Winter—the one man she so worshipped. Then, struggling to free herself, she laid Mr. Edgely's letter in his open hand.

"Read it—it is all true—I dare not be false to him now."

And Chris read it over carefully.

"I don't care a whit for his claims. I want just one word, Octavia—you love me?"

And for answer she buried her face in her trembling hands.

"My darling," and his voice grew very tender and confiding, "suppose I were to tell you I have explained my prior claim to Mr. Edgely, and that he releases you?"

A wildly happy light shone in her eyes.

"Oh, Chris—"

"Exactly. Well, I have seen Mr. Edgely—ah, by the by, here he is. Uncle Horace!"

Octavia started from her chair, pale with amazement. Mr. Edgely came forward to meet her.

"Am I forgiven for winning my nephew's wife by proxy? Octavia, my dear child, if you knew how dear you have grown to me, and how noble I know you to be, you would forgive me, I am sure, for giving you to my nephew."

It seemed so strange, so unreal; and uncle Pelatiah and aunt Sarah Ann stood mute with surprise, while Chris laughed in the completeness of his joy.

"We owe it all to you, uncle Horace. It was you who started me in the road to fortune, and you who have got me the dearest girl in the world—"

"And nearly lost my own heart doing it," interrupted Mr. Edgely.

Octavia and Chris are perfectly content; while to this day uncle Horace and aunt Sarah Ann strive to explain it to each other's mutual satisfaction.

Without Mercy:  
OR,  
THREADS OF PURE GOLD.

A TALE OF TWO CONTINENTS.

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL.

AUTHOR OF "IN THE WEB," "OUT IN THE WORLD," "LAURA'S PERIL," "ETC., ETC."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PRISONER OF THE TOWER.

MADGE MOUTON was seated in front of a blazing fire of pine logs, that hissed and crackled and crackled, and the crimson glow of which lit up her features with a glare that added not a little to the weird and uncanny appearance of the woman.

"To-morrow," she muttered, "to-morrow will see the beginning of the end. To-morrow Harold Holcombe will begin to feel what it is to be haunted by a sister's vengeance for years and years; he will begin to realize that I am more than a scolding woman; that I can do as well as dare. Better for him that Gertrude Moulton was sleeping in that churchyard, where her successful rival sleeps to-night, and that he were lying, stiff and stark, by her side, than that I should do what I will do to-morrow."

She rubbed her hands together and smiled, a fierce, ugly smile, and then continued: "He may beg for mercy, and make promises, but he won't be able to deceive me again. That he has managed to do too long. I've been a dupe, a tool, a plaything for this fellow all these years, in hopes of making Gertrude's child the heiress of Holcombe Hall, the mistress of proud English manors and broad fertile fields, but all that is gone now—gone like a day-dream that only dazzled to deceive."

The woman was silent for a moment; then she burst forth again: "I ought not to have consented to having the girl called his niece when she was his own child. Her name is Hester Holcombe, not Corwin, and she should have had her real name had I been as keen and shrewd as he has proved himself to be."

She rubbed her hands together in the old fierce fashion, as if she would cleanse them of all complicity in the wrong she complained of.

While thus engaged the door was pushed open, and the large hat of Byron Skittles was thrust into sight.

Madge was upon her feet in an instant. "What do you want now?" she asked, recognizing the attorney at the first glance.

"Pardon me for this rather unseasonable interview," he replied, stepping in and approaching Madge; "but I wanted to ask you a few questions relative to this Holcombe matter."

"Well, go on," said Madge, pushing him

a chair, and seating herself; "what do you want to know?"

"I came to inquire if you had any positive proof that your sister died by the hand of Holcombe?"

He was shifting closer and closer to her.

"Proof! What more proof do you want than I've already—?" She did not finish the sentence, for Skittles, with a rapidity we would not have been ready to give him credit for, thrust a gag, in the shape of a large neckerchief, in her mouth, and, at the same time, pinned her arms tightly behind her.

She made a desperate effort to free herself, and would doubtless have succeeded in doing so, had not Toy and Holcombe rushed in, and, with the aid of a rope, tied her hands and feet.

It would be utterly impossible to describe the look that came into the woman's eyes as she recognized Holcombe, and saw, too, that he was merely a confederate of the monkey-like lawyer, who had duped her so cruelly.

She strained the thongs that bound her, but without avail, and Toy and Skittles lifted her to her feet, which they now unbound, and Toy said:

"Walk now. Put your feet under you."

"Yes, you may as well take matters coolly," added Skittles; "we don't intend you any bodily harm. You shall be better taken care of where you are going than where you now are."

She stood erect, and flashed her eyes at Holcombe, who, like a guilty coward, kept in the background and maintained an utter silence.

It was a long way back to the Hall, and Dark Swamp was never more dismal than on this occasion.

The cypress, clothed in garments of swinging moss, grew so dense that even the faint light of the stars failed to penetrate the depths of the solitude, and the soil was so oozy and damp that the whole party were ever and anon ankle deep in the black mire.

Skittles growled and talked all the way; Harold was silent, while Toy grunted and panted, as if wholly unused to such violent exercise.

Finally Holcombe Hall was reached, and Madge conveyed to the room in the tower that had been selected for her prison. Here the gag was taken out of her mouth by Toy, the others having retired to the lower part of the house, and the woman began to understand the object of her arrest and her probable fate. This did not prevent her from demanding: "Why was I brought here?"

"For safe-keeping, I believe," was the meek reply.

"But I'm no criminal to be locked up in this fashion."

"No one said you was," said Toy, "but people with long tongues are dangerous, and it's better to have you here than master in jail."

"But this is a living tomb," ejaculated the woman. "It is cruel for three stout men to take this mean advantage of a woman."

"Better to have you in this living tomb, than my master in a dead one," was the cool rejoinder.

"But your master is a murderer," exclaimed the woman, "and I know it."

"If you hadn't known it so well you mightn't have been here," said Toy, slamming the door, and locking it firmly on the outside.

Madge listened to his retreating footsteps until they died out into silence, and then she made a rush with all her force against the heavy door. The bolts rattled in their sockets, the chain on the outside clanked, a night-bird flew screaming by an orifice in the wall, and that was all.

The deep darkness, the cold walls, the thought that this was to be her abode until death came, drove the poor creature, long verger upon actual insanity, into its dread confines, and, uttering one prolonged shriek that echoed fearfully throughout that old pile, she fell prone upon the floor, senseless—almost lifeless. The next morning found her a staring, pitiable maniac.

## CHAPTER XIX.

LOST AT SEA.

MONTHS flew by, and Tracy Cuthbert found plenty of work and tolerably good pay too; and from the Slough of Despond he had emerged, at last, as Jack Atwell predicted he would, inspired with renewed confidence in his own ability to make his way in the world without the assistance of his uncle Harold or anybody else.

He had not attained this, however, without a desperate and persistent struggle—a struggle such as at one period of his life he would have considered himself incapable of waging under any circumstances.

But the thought of his little wife, Dora, nerved him in the dark hours of doubt, and the hope of seeing her soon gave him fresh courage to go forward.

On a scorching July day he paid the good captain of the Argylly Dora's passage-money, and now—It being September—he was anxiously awaiting her arrival.

As the time approached, when the underwriters assured him the vessel would arrive, he could not remain in his studio at all, and, instead of painting, he haunted the landing all day, only to go back at night to his lodgings in Dryades street, disappointed and tired.

Thus days and weeks flew by, and Pogram and Waddle, to whom the cargo of the Argylly had been consigned, began to grow nervous and apprehensive lest some accident had befallen the vessel.

They kept their suspicions on Tracy for a long time, for they understood the cause of his anxiety, and they forged a half-dozen probabilities that might very readily detain her; but, finally, when she was overdue fifteen days they threw off the mask and showed the young husband their despair.

"She left Southampton ten days before the Pericles," said Waddle, to Tracy, one morning, "and the Pericles arrived here eight days ago, and is now almost ready to leave again."

The hopeless tone of Mr. Waddle's voice—he who was always so sanguine before—struck a chill to Tracy's heart, and tremblingly he gasped:

"Then you think she is lost—that she has gone down with all on board?"

"I wouldn't like to say that," replied Mr. Waddle, "for few vessels perish nowadays that some are not saved from them."

"But wouldn't they have reached here ere this?"

"No, there is no reason to suppose that they would, for the very good reason, that, if the Argylly went down, and some of her

passengers were saved by a passing vessel, it don't necessarily follow that that ship should be bound for this port. Perhaps they were picked up by a vessel bound for one of the West Indies or South American ports, and in that case we might not hear from them for some weeks to come, it might be longer."

"Then you really believe the Argylly is lost?" said Tracy.

"I don't say she is; God forbid, sir; but I'm speaking of the worst possible phase of the case, looking at the darkest side of the picture."

Mr. Waddle was proceeding to unfold the brighter view, when a lad entered the counting-room of Pogram & Waddle and handed the latter a telegram. It was dated at Pilot Town, at the mouth of the Mississippi, and read as follows:

"The Royal George, from Liverpool, has arrived. Picked up a boat's crew belonging to the ship Argylly, which perished at sea in a hurricane off the Bahamas, on the 15th of September."

The dispatch was signed by the captain of the Royal George, and Mr. Waddle passed it without a word of comment to Tracy.

He read it through and through; then, as the spirit of a new hope warmed his sinking heart, he said, handing the message back to Mr. Waddle:

"I feel certain, sir, that my Dora—my wife was saved, and that she is now at the Balize. I'm going down, sir, on the first boat."

He rushed out of the office and into Pogram street, but before he had walked far he heard Mr. Waddle's quick footsteps behind him, and turning, met that gentleman kindly, sympathetic glance.

"Cuthbert, I followed you to tell you that your speediest method of obtaining information is by telegraphing down there."

Yes; Tracy had not thought of that, strange as it may appear, but now he felt grateful to Waddle for relieving him of hours of anxiety and suspense, and in company with the latter, he rushed into the telegraph-office and sent off the following:

"To the Captain of the Royal George, Pilot Town, La."

"Is Dora Cuthbert among the saved from the wreck of the Argylly? Answer immediately."

"TRACY CUTHBERT."

The young man took the message with a cool, indifferent air, spelled it over carefully, and Tracy thought tediously; counted the words and asked: "Do you wish to pay for this, sir?"

"Yes, yes, send it off."

"Fifty-three cents, sir."

The young husband hurriedly pulled out his pocket-book and gave the clerk a dollar gold-piece. "There, don't mind the change until you have sent off the message," he said, flushed and excited.

"We never do things in that style here," replied the young man behind the counter, with an air of the greatest importance.

"Change, sir."

Tracy could have throttled the fellow, when he saw him dawdle back to an operator in the furthest corner of the room, and heard him say:

"Jenkins, send this off in its turn."

"How long will it be, ere its turn comes?" asked Tracy.

"Can't tell," was the dry response.

"But, sir," cried the young husband, "that message is of the utmost importance. The ship on which I was expecting my wife has foundered at sea, and all that have been rescued are at Pilot Town. I wish to ascertain if she is among the fortunate. You see now, sir, how important that message is."

"Yes," put in Mr. Waddle, "and this poor fellow will die of anxiety if you keep him waiting long."

"But, sir, we have so many messages relative to cargoes and shipments—"

"Oh, curse the cargoes and shipments!" replied the merchant, now out of all patience; "this is concerning a human life which is worth more to this young man than all the merchandise that has reached this city in a twelvemonth."

The clerk opened his eyes at this outburst in blank amazement, and apparently fearing another shot of the same kind, he called back to Jenkins, the operator, telling him to send that last message at once.

"When do you suppose I will have an answer?" asked Tracy.

"How do I know?" replied the clerk: "Perhaps he won't answer at all, or maybe won't be at Pilot Town, when this gets there."

"But when will he call for an answer?" demanded Waddle.

"In an hour, if he likes," was the curt response, and then Tracy thanked Waddle for his kindness, and walked off toward the levee.

The next hour was a very long one to that poor stranger as he wandered hither and thither, trying in vain to keep up the hope that, now only dimly flickered in his heart. Of course he thought of the past; of the old, old times in Digby and Margate, when that sunny face lit up the scene with a radiance he had not forgotten, and when the thought would come, as it did come quite frequently, that perhaps his arms should never more enfold that lithe, slender form—that perhaps those bright eyes were sealed forever in death, he felt as if he must needs find solace in the swift current of the great river that rushed onward, onward incessantly to the Gulf, as the tide of humanity trends unceasingly toward the ocean of eternity.

When at last the hour had passed, Tracy entered the telegraph-office again.

"No message, sir," said the clerk, at once, and before Tracy could speak.

"The Royal George had crossed the bar before your dispatch reached her, and she is now being towed up to the city."

"When will she get here?" eagerly.

"Not more to-morrow morning; possibly not before noon."

And now it was only four o'clock. Sixteen hours more of weary, devouring suspense!

"What will I do with all these hours?" he exclaimed, when once in the street again. "To wander up and down those streets in torture; to go to my lodgings is no better."

He walked up Tchaptoulas street, unmindful of his surroundings, until he had reached St. Mary's Market. Here he stopped to rest and think a moment, and then he retraced his steps, reaching his lodgings just as a drenching rain set in, and night—an ugly, dark, rayless night—closed over the city.

## CHAPTER XX.

NO NEWS!

In anticipation of Dora's coming, Tracy had a suite of apartments furnished in his

lodgings. There were no grand displays of

vertu, no costly draperies, no high-priced fabrics, but every thing was characterized by a neatness in finish, and an elaboration in detail that bespoke, as well as any thing else could, possibly do, the taste of the man, and the desires of the woman.

There were plenty of pictures—little water views of Lake Pontchartrain, and sketches of deep woods, where sunshine and shadow struggled for supremacy—and statuary, too—Clites and Sappho, and a pure *spirituelle* Madonna, that Tracy had purchased because he fancied it bore a close resemblance to Dora.

Besides all these, there were a few cushioned chairs; a sofa and dressing-bureau; green shades on the window, muslin curtains over these.

The poor fellow had had hard work to scratch together money enough to provide this home for his bride, and now, when he had every thing complete, there was a possibility that it had been all in vain; that Dora's eyes—for which all had been done—would never rest upon that little home at all.

Tracy felt this as he stood in his little parlor, and glanced about him—glanced at the pictures, at the curtained windows, and in at the cozy chamber, which resembled, in its comfortable appointments, the daintiest nest one could imagine; and he felt, too, what a terrible empty place the world would be if, on the morrow, his worst fears were confirmed.

He did not go to bed during all the long hours of that night, but sat up and stared into the fire, and thought, and dreamt, and conjectured, while the wind sighed without, and the chill rain dashed against the window-panes in fitful gusts.

At last through the curtains the gray, melancholy daylight stole, and then Tracy, unable longer to remain indoors, made a hasty toilet, and stepped into the streets.

They were deserted as yet, for it was quite early, and the rain still fell in a drenching, pitiless way that kept most persons indoors. But Tracy did not seem to realize the disagreeable aspect of the weather, for he trudged on and on, until he reached the lower shipping.

A few lights were glimmering from the decks of vessels anchored out in the stream, which, owing to the density of the fog, appeared like bright stars endeavoring to penetrate the thick mists.

It need scarce be said that Tracy Cuthbert did not expect to find the Royal George at this early hour, but had she not been due for twelve days instead of so many hours, it is doubtful if he could have remained at his home.

The river had a fascination for him, and, as he walked down the wharf he muttered, half aloud:

"If she come not up your rushing tide to-day, I'll go down into your green depths to-night, and meet her in a land beyond the stream of death."

It did not strike him that that speech was absurd—it is unquestionably so—for he was so terribly in earnest, and was merely thinking aloud, and repeating a determination that he had made over and over again, during the preceding night.



Notwithstanding his air of abstraction, he fully understood every thing that had taken place; he understood, too, the full import of the terrible tidings that closed that day of wretchedness and suspense, and he knew, as well as a man can know, that the dull, aching sense of pain about his heart was threatening the very seat of life itself.

The lamps were being lit now, and ere he had gone far the darkness, aided by the fog, which crept up from the river again, became Stygian in its intensity, and he was forced to grope his way among the bales and barrels that lined the docks on every hand.

At one time he thought of returning to his lodgings, but he shuddered when he thought—as he did almost instantly—how lonely and desolate they would appear, now that he knew all his preparations had been in vain, and that the guest he had waited for so long would never come.

"I can not go home," he exclaimed. "I have no home; I'm a poor, unfortunate wretch who induced the only being who loved me to her death."

Then the picture of that perishing ship came up before him; he saw the pale faces grouped on the deck; the driving spray, the dark sky, then the thundering waters, and the crash of timbers, a pleading face amid the wreck; and then he covered his face to shut out the fearful mirage, and rushed headlong to the river.

He had reached the brink, and had divested himself of his hat and coat preparatory to taking that last fatal plunge into oblivion, when a stout arm grasped him, and Rupert Gaspard exclaimed:

"My God! don't do so rash a thing as this."

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 114.)

## Tracked to Death: OR, THE LAST SHOT.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID,  
AUTHOR OF "HELPLESS FRED," "JOHN RANCHER,"  
"SCALP HUNTERS," "WHITE CHIEF," ETC.

### CHAPTER LXXXV. ONCE MORE ALONE.

It was Charles Clancy who shouted "murderer!"

The thrill of hope he had felt at first sight of the approaching horseman quickly became disappointment when he saw it was not Simeon Woodley. This passed to despair as his eye rested on a savage costume and coronet of plumes, both conspicuous under the bright moonbeams. For he knew it was no Indian, but a savage far more to be dreaded.

He had recognized Darke before the latter was high enough to identify him, or rather to fancy himself gazing upon some spectral form.

To Clancy there appeared nothing strange in the encounter.

His fiendish foe had, no doubt, reached the rendezvous of the robbers, and there been rejoined by them as they returned to it with their spoil. Borlase had told him of the cruel internecine and given directions for finding the place. Embittered by the thought of having abandoned his captive—losing Helen Armstrong—he was coming to wreak his spite upon himself, Clancy, now helpless; perhaps to torture him still further—in the end put him to death.

Thus reflected Clancy, up till that moment when he saw Darke drag his horse almost on his haunches, and give out that terrified cry.

Then, unable to constrain his own long pent-up anger, he called out that man's name, adding the epithet, "murderer!"

It was wrong from him in the agony of the hour. He did not know that it could do any good. Indeed, after giving utterance to the cry, he fancied the reverse. The scared wretch would soon recover from his scare, return, and finish him.

Its effect was altogether different from what he had expected; as was also the behavior of his enemy. Both filled him with astonishment. He could not understand why Darke had shrieked out, and ridden away in such evident fright. Only after reflection did he comprehend the cause. Then it became clear enough.

Darke had not yet seen Borlase, nor had he recognized him, Clancy, while rescuing Helen Armstrong. The obscure light under the live oak had prevented it. Therefore the man still believed himself a murderer. Hence his horror at seeing a head—the head of him he had murdered!

No wonder, at such a time and in such a place! After his own surprise was over, Clancy watched the scared horseman, and took note of the direction in which he galloped off. He appeared to go without any definite aim, and without guiding his horse. He rode like a drunken man, or one under the influence of a wild terror—the terror still pursuing him.

But, long after, he heard the hoof-strokes rebounding upon the firm turf, gradually growing indistinct, at length dying in the far-off distance.

His departure gave Clancy but little relief, if any. At best it could be but a short respite. He would soon find his way to the rendezvous of the pirate pirates, have every thing explained, then return with renewed spite to take vengeance for all.

Clancy, thus reflecting, almost wished his enemy had remained, crushed in his skull with the butt of his gun, and so put an end to his misery.

Again the coyotes commenced making approach, drawing high with more audacity than ever. Their courage seemed increased. They saw that the human enemy on horseback had not molested them, but had gone off leaving the prey unprotected. They were now free to devour it.

After saluting the moon with their melancholy whine, they looped up, one after the other, until again collected around the strange thing. For to them, also, was it strange, though they were likely soon to be familiar with it. And the brutes circled about it, now taking one side, now another, as if going through the mazes of a cotillion—a dance of werewolves! They grinned, growled, and barked, their sharp incisors glistening in the moonlight like teeth in the jaws of a death's head.

To him thus menaced it made but slight difference now. He might as well be devoured by wolves as slaughtered by Richard Darke, who would soon return to slaughter him. Of either alternative the thought was appalling—enough to bereave him of reason.

"Oh, God!"

Again came the cry from his lips, and, carried afar over the smooth surface of the

plain, reverberated from the hollow limestone rock underlying it.

### CHAPTER LXXXVI. TENTS UNOCCUPIED.

A stream running through a canoned channel, with banks rising three hundred feet above its bed. They soar up almost vertically, forming twin cliffs that front one another, their facades not half so far apart. Rough with projecting points of rock, and scarred by water erosion, they look like giants with grim, wrinkled visages gazing at one another. In places they approach, almost touching; then, diverging, sweep round the opposite side of an ellipse; again converging, like the curved handles of callipers. Through the spaces thus opened the stream continues, though not in a channel, cliff-confined, but through little valleys of oblong oval shape, more or less regular, whose vivid verdure, contrasting with the somber escarpments, with the bordering of brown plain above, likens them to brightly-tinted landscape pictures set in rustic frame.

The traveler who attempts to go along the stream in question will have to keep upon the crest of either cliff; for no nearer can he approach. Its deeply-indented channel. And here he will see only the sterile, treeless plain; or, if forms of vegetation meet his eye, they will be such as but strengthen the impression of sterility—some scrambling mesquite bushes, clumps of cactaceae, perhaps the spheroidal form of a melocactus, or a yucca, with its tuft of rigid leaves, the latter resembling a bunch of bayonets rising above a musket "stack" on a military parade-ground.

He will have no view of the bright green foliage expanding itself in the river valley a hundred yards below the hoofs of his horse. He will not even get a glimpse of the stream itself, unless by going close to the edge of a precipice and craning his neck over. And to do this he must needs diverge from his course to avoid the transverse rivulets, each trickling along the bed of its own deep-cut arroyo.

Such unapproachable streams are many of the affluents of the Upper Colorado, still unexplored by the land-seeking speculator. For there is no land on them worth "locating"—at least, by those who look forward to forming plantations upon an extended scale.

But there are spots to attract the squatter or hunter—the elliptical spaces of river-bottom above described—some of them like little Gardens of Eden, reposing hundreds of feet below the surface of the surrounding plain.

One of these semi-subterranean valleys claims our attention. Looking down into it from the cliff-edge, we behold a vegetation of every shade and hue, from clearest emerald to darkest Lincoln green. We see a stream gliding on through its center, with the sheen of silver and the sinuosity of a snake. We observe birds of bright plumage, with pinions spread, flitting from tree to tree. We hear their shrill cries and sweet warblings, all in striking contrast with the somber silence of the desert behind us.

If we think of descending into this sunken Paradise, or Hesperides, we shall have to make a long *detour*, and go down through one of the *gullches* intersecting the plateau at right-angles to that of the main stream. And we should have difficulty in discovering which one of them would afford a practicable path to the level below. No traveler of the common kind would be likely to find it. Yet some have found the way; as is proved by a group of tents standing under the tall pecan-trees that fringe the stream, here and there extending back to the bottom of the bluff.

They are tents of rude construction, partly covered with the skins of animals, partly with scraps of old canvas, in places eked out with a piece of blanket or a cast coat.

No one could mistake them for the tents of ordinary travelers; and they are equally unlike those that would be seen in an encampment of Indians. To whom, then, do they belong? Were their owners present there need be no difficulty in answering the question. But they are not. Neither outside of them, nor inside, is a soul to be seen; not anywhere around. No human form appears in the valley; no voice of man is heard reverberating from its cliffs. If there were, the birds would neither be so strident nor so softly melodious.

And yet the place shows signs of recent occupation. There are fires outside the tents, still smoking; and within implements, utensils, articles of bedding, provisions, in some there are bottles, and stone jars, containing strong drinks, both brandy and whisky; and, besides these, good store of tobacco. Than this no better proof that the encampment, though deserted, is not abandoned, whether its owners be white men or Indians.

Who and what are they? Red-skins or pale-faces, which? The question will soon be answered; for yonder they come!

### CHAPTER LXXXVII. A CHANGE OF COLOR.

DESCENDING through one of the gorges that lead down from the upper plain, a cohort of horsemen is seen entering the valley and continuing on toward the camp. The confident air with which they approach it tells that they are the owners of the empty tents.

They ride in Indian file—the narrow path compelling them to this mode of march. To all appearance they are Indian warriors. The copper hue of their skins, with its smearing of paint, their buck-skin breech-clouts, fringed leggings, and feather head-dresses are all articles of Indian costume.

There is one among them who differs from the rest, as also from the American aboriginal. His skin is yellow, not red; his hair crisped, not hanging. And, instead of dressed deer-skin, he is clad in cotton habiliments; a coarse shirt and loose drawers, with wool hat upon his head. His complexion bespeaks him a mulatto; his costume a plantation slave. Although with the warriors, he is evidently not of them. The manner in which he is treated proclaims him their prisoner.

Once in the valley bottom, they break rank—or, rather, file—and ride on toward the tents in a ruck. This is not Indian discipline, and should cause doubt about their being of the race of red-men.

There need be no uncertainty after they arrive at the encampment. Any one then hearing their converse could tell they are not Comanches, although wearing the Comanche dress.

After dismounting and making their

horses fast to the trees, they enter the tents, bring out bottles and tobacco, take a drink, and commence smoking.

Beyond this they make no further movement, either to unsaddle their horses or strip off their accoutrements, as if for a prolonged stay.

They evidently await the coming up of others, with some one to give them directions.

They have not long to wait. Soon a second and smaller party is seen coming down the gorge; like the first, costumed *a la Comanche*. At its head is a man of Herculean stature, evidently the chief of all.

On reaching the encampment he gazes around, his glance sent inquiringly through the tents. Then he calls aloud, interrogatively:

"Haven't they got here yet?"

There is no response, and he repeats the inquiry.

It is answered by one of those first upon the ground:

"No, cap, they ain't got hyar yet; ne'er a one of 'em."

The chief gives utterance to an exclamation resembling the bellow of a bull, only more blasphemous. Then, gritting his teeth together, he flings himself from the saddle, his escort doing likewise.

When on foot he says to his surrounding:

"Boys! I reckon they must have gone astray while crossin' the big plain; an' that's what's detainin' them. 'Twas a mistake to trust to two greenhorns, as both air. I see that now, but there's no help for it. Lucky they ain't got the heavy along wi' them. I guess they'll find their way after wanderin' a bit. If they don't, some o' us must go back in search of them. Meantime, there ain't no reason for our bein' savages any longer. I s'pose you all want once more to become civilized bein's, and as such, make a visit to the settlements. With the contents of these barrels to buy diversion with, I reckon y'all be inclined to spend a month or two 'mong the senoritas of San Antonio. Is that your idea?"

The answer was a shout of affirmation, simultaneous, unanimous.

"Then let's prepare for leavin'; and I say the sooner the better. If we've got to go back in search of them that's now missin', we'll be safer changin' the color of our skins, as well as castin' off this truck that's clingin' around us. It's done good service this time, and may do ag'in. For all that, we won't want it any more now. 'Twarf! let's leave it off, and take a plunge out o' savage life into civilization."

The speaker ended his harangue by throwing aside the garb that lent to his rough, gigantic figure an air of picturesqueness.

Off came buck-skin breeches, leggings and moccasins, with the plumed para encircling his brow. Then, going inside one of the tents, he came out again holding in his hand what appeared to be a piece of soap. It was this.

He made straight toward the stream, and in ten seconds after stood waist-deep in the water, scrubbing his skin like one determined upon a severe course of hydropathic treatment.

His comrades were soon beside him, imitating his example.

When they returned to the bank, and there stood dripping in *pura naturabius*, it could be seen that there was not an Indian among them. They were all of the boasted Caucasian race; white—or, rather, might be called ripe color—both in shape and hue far inferior to the bronze-skinned, symmetrical savage.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 97.)

## Not Wisely, but too Well.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

"VASSAR CARLETON, I do not believe you ever loved; nay, I do not give you credit for possessing a heart."

"Indeed, Miss Ambrose, and why, may I ask?"

"Simply because I have never seen you touched by feeling; you give freely of your riches to the poor, you have stood night after night by the bedside of the sick, and yet showed no sympathy; I saw you when you stood over the open grave of your mother, and stern and cold was your face, not soft and saddened by grief."

"You are a good 'catch,' an elegant man of the world, a cynic, a heartless knave, some say, and yet I have never known you to feel; I do not believe you could love a woman."

"Beatrice Ambrose, you know not what you say; you are a foolish girl," and as the dark, earnest eyes of the man before her looked down into her own, and his deep voice was stern, the saucy beauty was startled at the emotion her words had caused.

Both of them were the petted idols of society, in the town of M—; the one, a man whose early life had been one of adventure, and lay in mystery, for of the past he seldom spoke.

A still boy, only child of wealthy parents, he had run away from home and gone to sea, when but sixteen years of age, and for nearly as many years he was not heard from, and all had believed him lost, when he suddenly returned home to find his father dead, and his aged mother rapidly journeying toward the grave.

A year after, his mother died, and Vassar Carleton inherited the vast wealth of his parents.

Again he left his home, and after nearly two years' absence, it was whispered that he would soon return.

The old Carleton manor-house was thoroughly overhauled, the grounds were enlarged and improved; the stables were supplied with superb horses and carriages; foreign paintings adorned the walls of the mansion, which was filled with costly furniture, and the old house and its broad acres became a palace in an Eden of beauty.

Then once more it re-echoed to the tread of its owner, and the polished man—the handsome, fascinating, wealthy Vassar Carleton—became society's favorite; but years passed on, and designing mamma found it impossible to insure him in the toils of matrimony.

The other—Beatrice Ambrose—was a beauty and an heiress. Accomplished, witty and graceful, she had broken the hearts of all her admirers, excepting one, and that one was Vassar Carleton.

Certainly he admired her, and appreciated her noble qualities, and feeling that she did not seek his companionship, except in true friendship, the girl had found favor in the eyes of the man of the world.

He had accompanied Beatrice to a forest-

party that was held some few miles from M—, upon the banks of a beautiful lake.

While others of the gay throng were enjoying themselves in boating, fishing, dancing and flirting, Vassar Carleton and Beatrice Ambrose had strolled together along the shore of the lake, and it was in answer to some remark of his, of a cynical nature, that she spoke as she did about his heartlessness.

Impressed by his stern manner, called up by her words, Beatrice remained silent for some moments, and then, stopping beside a fallen tree, her companion said:

"You accuse me of having no heart—of never having loved a woman; do you care to hear a page of my past life?"

"Indeed I would, if you place sufficient confidence in me to tell me."

"I do trust you; I know you better than the world knows you, and beneath your coquetry there lies the heart of a true woman."

"Sit there, and I will tell you what I have never told another living being."

Half-frightened by his manner, charmed by his words of praise, and anxious to know more of the life of the man before her, Beatrice sat down upon the fallen tree, while her companion seated himself beside her, and began his story.

"You think I never loved; ah! how mistaken you are!"

"You were only a year old, when, nineteen years ago, I left my home, and only from hearsay know that I remained away unheard from for a long time."

"A foolish freak to see the world, independent of my father's riches, led me to leave home."

"I went before the mast, and by hard work, harder knocks, and rough experience, arose in seven years to the command of a small brig running between the West Indies and Peru, and frequently I made the voyage without a single passenger, and then again a number would be on board."

"Sailing from Vera Cruz, Mexico, upon one voyage, I had as passengers an army officer and his wife, who were going to Lima."

"I knew their history to a certain extent, for my shipping merchant had told me that his friend, Major Nuna Altegro, was desirous of leaving the country without it being known, and interested me in his behalf by saying upon the evening before I was to sail, that the major was to fight a duel with an officer high in rank, for some insult offered to a lady to whom he was engaged; that if the major slew his adversary, he would at once fly to the ship, when the seniority, his lady-love, would join him, accompanied by a priest, and they would be married in my cabin, and then both would become my passengers."

"The duel was fought, the young officer killed his superior and fled to my ship, and was shortly afterward joined by Senorita Vienna and the priest."

"There, in my cabin, the lovers were made man and wife, my friend giving the bride away, and I serving as a witness."

"Need I describe that woman? No, it were useless to try; so I will only say that she was sixteen when I first saw her, and the most lovely being I ever beheld; her husband was a handsome, brave young fellow, whom I learned to like, even though he married Vienna Diva."

"We had a prosperous run to the Horn, and then came trouble, for day after day we struggled with the tempest, until there was no hope left, and I felt that we were drifting upon the western coast of South America."

"One dark, stormy night, dimasted and rolling fearfully, the good ship struck upon a rock, and nearly the whole crew were washed overboard."

"Finding that the vessel remained stationary, I told the men to cling to the bulwarks until morning, and kept Major Altegro and his wife in the cabin, fearing for them to come upon the decks."

"At length the waves became so terrible, I feared the ship would go to pieces; so, with the aid of the four remaining men of my crew, I got the life-boat ready, and then brought to the deck the insensible form of Vienna, while one of the men aided the major, whose arm had been broken by his being hurled down when the ship struck."

"I was about to get some provisions on board, when a large wave dashed over the deck, and carried two of my men away, while I had just time to cling to the boat as it was borne off from the decks."

"With the aid of the two men, who I noticed were the very worst of my crew, I clambered into the boat, which was borne shoreward, and to my great astonishment, half an hour afterward, stranded upon a sandy beach."

"I sprang out, and calling to one of the men to hold the boat, and the other to aid the Mexican officer, I seized Vienna in my arms and bore her up the hill, where I was soon after joined by the others."

"There we sat until the morning came, and then what a wild scene was before us!"

"There lay my noble ship upon the rocks, her strong timbers still bidding defiance to the fury of the waves, while the beach was strewn with the bodies of my dead crew."

"Nobly did Vienna bear up, and I having set and dressed, as well as I could, the broken arm of the major, they both took their troubles lightly."

"To shorten my story, we were upon an island, a pleasant one, however, and, as the ship had not gone to pieces, we got from her all that was necessary to make ourselves comfortable, and were certainly free from want."

"A month passed, and then another, and yet no sail appeared to gladden our hearts."

"With my two women I had had some trouble, for they were an evil pair, but, as they had behaved better after I had punished them for a remark one made, and the other laughed at, to Vienna, I believed they intended to behave themselves; but, how I was mistaken, you will see: for one day, as I was coming from a short hunt in the hills, I heard Vienna scream, and then a pistol-shot. We had erected a cabin with three rooms, and from here the sounds came."

"Like the wind I sped toward the spot, and, entering, saw the major lying, bleeding, upon the floor, while Vienna was struggling to free herself from the two ruffians."

"Two shots from my revolver sent them to the ground, both dead."

"Upon examination I found that the Mexican was painfully, yet not dangerously wounded, and I extracted the ball and put him to bed, Vienna anxiously watching, with scared face, my every action."

"From her I learned that the ruffians had plotted to kill her husband, and then lie in wait for my return, when they would shoot me."

"She was to be their prize, when, after tiring of her, they were to kill her, and, taking the life-boat, leave the island, with the gold we had, which, with what belonged to the ship and the Mexican major, was considerable."

"Resting upon her bed, she had heard all, they believing her upon the beach with her husband. Ere she could leave to give warning of their intention, her husband entered and was shot down, while she was seized."

"Two months more passed, and again the major recovered under the careful nursing of his wife and myself, for I did nurse him, although I loved Vienna."

"Loved her did I say? Why, idolatry is a tame word for my feelings, for I had idolized her from the moment I saw her."

"At length came relief; a ship hove in sight, and, putting them and their baggage in the long-boat, I hoisted sail and stood out to meet the ship."

"They were taken on board, and, without a word, I shoved off and put back for the island, unheeding their cries to return, and determined to live alone, far from the home of man."

"For six years I led that life of solitude, engaging my time in reading—for I had plenty of books—hunting and fishing."

"Then I longed for the world once more, and getting together my effects, put to sea in the long-boat."

"A week passed, and then I was espied by a ship and taken on board, and, weeks after, was landed in Vera Cruz, for to that port was the vessel destined."

"Purchasing a wardrobe, I strolled into a cafe in the evening, and, while seated at a table, enjoying a glass of wine, heard a party of officers discussing the Government of the United States. One of them was very insulting in his language, and I resented it by throwing the contents of my glass in his face, and in an instant all was excitement."

"He challenged me, I accepted, and an American who had heard the conversation acted as my second."

"The next morning we met: my antagonist was a man of thirty, with a face concealed by a long beard, and I also was bearded like a Turk, after my long exile."

"Pistols were the weapons, and I killed the Mexican, who was lying upon the ground, dying, when, suddenly, a woman, pale and wild, sprang from a carriage and threw herself upon the body."

"That woman was Vienna, the one I had so madly loved, and I had killed her husband—so changed by our full, long beard, neither having recognized the other."

"As she turned toward me, in the bitterest tones she gave me her curse, and once more fell upon her husband's body."

"Gently they raised her, but her heart had broken under its stroke of anguish—she was dead!"

"For some time longer I wandered round the world, and then came home to ask forgiveness of my parents for my long and cruel desertion of them. My poor father was dead, and, a year after, I placed my mother in her grave."

"No man has suffered more than I have, no man can feel more. Oh! have I not loved, have I not felt?" and Vassar Carleton bowed his head upon his hands.

"You dear old fellow! Forgive my unkindness. I did not know you, Vassar, as I now do; henceforth let us be friends," and Beatrice Ambrose laid her small hand upon the broad shoulder of the man before her.

"Beatrice!" and Vassar Carleton arose and took both of her hands in his. "Beatrice, once I loved as I never can love again; you know the story of my life, and I had not loved you I would have remained silent. Will you take me as I am, and shall we journey together, heart with heart, hand in hand, as man and wife?"

"Yes, Vassar, for, since I have known you, I have loved you most dearly."

One month after that forest party on the lake side, the town of M— was wild with excitement over the wedding of Vassar Carleton and Beatrice Ambrose.

## Will's Proposal.

BY ARCHIE IRONS.

CLEAR and loud rung out the bells on the sharp, frosty air of the bright February morning of which I write. The sleighing was good, the weather fine, and Will Carlisle the happiest of all the many sleighers on the road—or, at least, that was his opinion, with pretty Nettie Willis enveloped in cloaks and furs at his side.

For she was pretty, with her short, sunny brown curls, her pure face, and clear, ringing laugh. For, you see, Will was in love with this little fairy, which was very foolish, of course—but never mind, I'll tell you how it came about.

Will had an aunt (all sensible young men have, I believe), and this one, though only an aunt by marriage, made an especial favorite of Will, and petted and spoiled and lectured him alternately, which Will took all in good part, as a matter of course; and when Aunt Prue's niece, Nettie Willis, came to visit her, nothing was more natural than that she and Will should become fast friends at once.

Will was standing on the hotel steps that evening, thinking of Nettie, and recalling every word and look of hers, and wondering what her feelings were in regard to himself.

"I believe she loves me, at least I can't stand this any longer. I'll ask her to-morrow and know the worst."

Poor Will! asking her hand had been what he had been trying to do for the last week, and he could think while alone just what he wanted to say to her, and how to tell her how much he loved her, but there was always that lump in his throat that would go neither down nor up, whenever he tried to speak; so the all-important question remained unsolved.

He was still standing on the steps, when two gentlemen came leisurely along the sidewalk.



and thus reasoning, he went up to his room with a heavy heart.

The next day he was busy, but the next he went up to his room, and found the door open. He went in, and found the door open. He went in, and found the door open.

"Are those cakes for me, aunt Prue?" She turned round with a little cry of surprise, scattering the cakes in every direction on the table.

"Oh, you good-for-nothing scamp you, to scare any one in that way. You don't deserve one," and I suppose he didn't, either; but aunt Prue selected the largest, nicest twisted one there was, saying, that she supposed little boys always had to have something to keep them good-natured; and Will took it and wandered off to the sitting-room to find Nettie, who, aunt Prue said, was in there "tryin' some new music."

He heard the soft notes of the piano as he approached the sitting-room, and she heard his step, too, for the music ceased suddenly, and when he entered she was arranging the books on the center-table, which, it is my private opinion, did not greatly need it.

They talked and chatted and laughed, on commonplace topics, and she played and sang, at his request; and somehow, before he hardly knew it, he had asked her to ride again; so she got her things, and after she was wrapped until she declared she would not feel the cold at all, he insisted that she should take another shawl, which he himself wrapped around her, saying, playfully, as he did so:

"I must wrap you up like a pet kitten, for if you should chance to take cold while riding with me some one would be very sorry."

She blushed a little at that, and said, demurely:

"I don't know who it would be, unless it was aunt Prue. But, look! we aren't the only sleigh-riders," she added, as several sleighs dashed past, filled with their lively freight.

"Will felt very queer. He gave his collar a little spiteful jerk, by way of admonishing it to stay in its proper place, and then turning to Nettie, said:

"You will give me an invitation to the wedding, won't you?"

"Really, how can I when I don't know whose it is?" with a little mischievous light in the dark bright eyes.

"Whose? why yours, of course."

"That is a mistake," she said, with a blush and a little laugh. "I have no intention of committing the common blunder."

"But surely you are engaged to be married?" he said, while a fierce joy leaped up in his heart.

"I beg your pardon, but I am not engaged to be married," was the laughing reply.

Will put his hands in his pockets, drew them out again, looked at the carpet, and then glanced at Nettie.

That young lady was very much interested in the view out of the window, and Will, plucking up sudden courage, said:

"Nettie, I have something to ask—"

"Oh, see!" she interrupted, suddenly. "There goes Essie Clay and Heber Foster. Hurry, Will, I want to see Essie!"

Thus admonished, our hero shut his teeth, with the mental resolve not to be so neatly balked next time, and dutifully obeyed.

The sleighing was excellent, and while couple after couple passed them, Nettie laughing and talking like a magpie, Will sat almost silent, trying to master courage to broach the momentous subject, and learn whether there was any hope for him.

The cause of his anxiety, like all of her sex in like positions, was sublimely indifferent to his silent mood, and utterly oblivious to the fact that he was on the "anxious seat," made herself so bewitchingly gay that he was in a worse state than ever. Half a dozen times he made a desperate attempt to be courageous, and half opened his mouth to speak, but as often his courage ebbed, and he said nothing.

At last, in lieu of replying to some merry question, he turned toward her, and exclaimed:

"Oh, Nettie! I—"

"Unlucky Will! The sight of the consciousness, and, withal, somewhat amused face beside him, deprived him of his suddenly acquired self-possession instantly, and drove the tide of eloquence from his mind.

The awful lump leaped up in his throat, and, try as he might, not another word could he utter. He broke into a perspiration, hunched about nervously, and pulled desperately at his collar, but to no purpose, his tongue refused to do his will, and he strove to seek relief from his awkward position by loosening the reins and increasing their speed.

"The clouds look like a storm," remarked Nettie, innocently, though our hero fancied he could detect a tremor of merriment in her voice, and perspired with renewed vigor.

"There is a flock of snowbirds—see, Will."

But Will did not see. Unfortunately—or fortunately, as he afterward thought—he wasn't looking at any thing in particular just then, and his loosely reined steeds, going pretty much wherever they liked, ran sideways against a large stone, and the next instant the cutter was overturned, and its occupants thrown out.

Nettie, still enveloped in robes, reposed securely beside the offending stone, but Will was less fortunate. With the lump in his throat, and the proposal on his tongue's end, he had landed headforemost into an unusually deep snow-bank, where he remained for an instant with his pedal extremities elevated at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Hasily scrambling out of the drift, he gained an upright position, and, with his mouth half-full of snow, exclaimed:

"Nettie, I love you! Will you marry me?"

It was the last straw that broke the camel's back.

There was a reply from the heap of buffalo robes, but it was mingled with a peal of such inextinguishable laughter, as at any other time would have driven the bashful lover to distraction. But now he had caught the sound of a "yes," half-smothered in the ringing laugh, and in an instant he was over beside Nettie, and had her in his arms.

"You heartless little wretch," he exclaimed, feeling as if relieved of a ton's weight.

"Oh, Nettie! That was the luckiest overturn I ever had in my life. But I don't know how I came to say it!"

And it is a mystery to him to this day.

## NINETY AGAINST NINE.

As reported by Mart Handley.

BY EDWARD WILLET.

"That's ninety to nine, and that's ten to one." 'Twas Jimmy who spoke, old Tom Evans' son, A mere chip of a boy, but a chip of a block That was tough and solid and firm as a rock. Young Jim had sneaked out on the plain one night, And had counted them Sioux about square and right; And when he came in to the camp to report, You just ever seen old Evans' report? He abused him, in course, but a girl in his eye Was tellin' us claps all the while, on the sly, That the old man was prouder than ever of a sheet, And was ready to go his last dollar on Jim.

And so that was ninety 'ginst nine. That was me, And old Evans, and Jim, and Buck Hawkins—that's three— A Delaware, Jim Baker, and those of his men, And that stranger chap; but that ort to be ten, A countin' old Bony, my dog, as one, I tried to count fair, but I lost the run.

No matter for that, atween me and you; That was ninety, Jim said, of them p'ison red Sioux. It was terrible odds; but we all felt fine, And war what you might call, nowadays, a "picked nine."

We all could shoot center—every one, 'Ceptin' the stranger, whose new-fashioned gun, That broke in two pieces just at a touch, We all of us reckoned war'n't fitted for much.

We had camped on the bluff, with the river below, And that side was safe, any fool might know, In fact we had piled all our packs and such, And dug up the dirt till we made quite a ditch, And in it we lay, and looked out on the plain, Determined to fight, though all should be slain; And I tell you, things looked most terribly blue, As we took our chances at 'tween them Sioux.

The moon riz up—she was red as blood— And the Indians kept pourin' on like a flood, Like a flood that sweeps in a tall canyon through, Kem, ripin' and tearin', them p'ison Sioux.

As the Indians rode on, with their horses red hot, I squinted around at the boys as they sat. They were ready, and all of 'em looked sorter queer, It war'n't—no, it war'n't you might call 'em fair; But they gripped their guns in a nervous way, As of the devil and all was to pay.

Jim Baker looked vicious—that was his style— And his face was fixed up in the horriddest smile. Tom Evans was dead as a stone, and still as a stump, And little Jim's eyes fairly sparkled with fun. But that stranger—I'm willin' to own I was beat; But I'll swar that his face was as white as a sheet, And that queer-lookin' gun, that was ready to break, I was mortal afeard would go off by mistake.

The others—well, they war all just about right, All ready and willin' and eager to fight. They didn't say nothin', nor make no fuss, But saw, with both eyes, that that bit of a muss' One of our chaps, and a tall canyon through, Kem, ripin' and tearin', them p'ison Sioux.

"Ready your rifles, that at the right!" 'Twas Jim Baker who spoke, and his eyes war so bright, I knowed he was jest rannin' over with fight. "Don't shoot till I give you the word; then begin; And then, boys, you'll have to burn powder like sin! I mark the red feather." A fool might have guessed, From the way the long rifles war laid on that rest, That the boys war in 'arnest, would all do their best.

The Sioux war right on us, when Jim gave the word. All at once the crack of them rifles war heard, And nine horses war ridin' without any men; But we said our say; it was clear turn then, And the Sioux key was sound and true and keen. We drewed all we had, to fight for our lives, 'Twould be a tight tussle, that all of us knew, And the stranger was dead as a stone, and still as a stump, And I loved they would 'save us' us. They didn't, that beat.

Far the stranger—I said I would own up beat— Was standin' in front, and breakin' his gun, And shootin' away at the Indians like fun. Them Sioux war astonished. I reckon they loved, That Satan had somehow got into our crowd, And war standin' 'tween them 'tween some sort of machine, That beat all the rifles they ever had seen. They stopped; then they flickered, and ran out of our line.

And we boys ag'in, fur to give 'em that change, And the boys' eyes snapped, at seemin' 'em run, And watchin' that stranger—a handlin' his gun, I owned I was beat 'bout the stranger, and Jim said, "But I'll swar that his face was as white as snow, And—here's whar the p'int of the joke comes in, that beat."

He was jest as cool as a snow-bank, too, Nary a word he spoke; but his style, And his little, peccol of half-inch of a smile, Just lifted us up, and filled us with hope, As the Indians ag'in war in on a lode.

We gave 'em our volley; but still they kem up, With a rush that we couldn't begin to stop, And then with one gasp, and one gasp, and one gasp, Knowin' them Indians war crazy for blood, They war hotter than fire, as they rode at us, that, Like a swarm of bees buzzin' around a bar, So mad that fur bullets they didn't care, And they meant to kill, and never to spar.

Right over our packs they piled in a heap; But they found us, and we war'n't asleep, We gripped our guns, and stood up to the rack, And many a red-skin prawled on his back.

Just then I've a notion that things took a mix, I'm sartin' for my sheer, I got in a fix. A knock on the head sent me down to the ground, And an Indian came and ran over me, and found, I saw his knife shine as he raised it high, And I'll swar that I couldn't hold shuppin' an eye, And all sorts of notions flew into my head; For I knowed I was nearly as good as dead, As the Indian hit me that like a log; When—stranger, I'm glad I counted that dog!

Satin' black kem across, with a bark like a yell, And the knife that that Indian had raised never fell. The next minute he bled like a well-struck shot, With old Bony's teeth gripped tight in his throat; And when he rolled over, the dog hit fast, And didn't let go, till he'd kicked his last.

I got up, took a shake, and squinted around, And things puzzled me some as I riz from the ground. For then Sioux, that I'd expected to chaw me all up, War runnin' as if they meant never to stop, And the boys war all livin', though some war sore, And that stranger war standin', as cool as afore, A-brakin' and shootin' his new-fashioned gun, And poppin' away at the Sioux on the run.

Tom Evans—no better man ever could be— Went up to the stranger, and, "Stranger," assa he, "You kin't run from Kain tek, I believe; but I'll swar, And we've acted this night so brave and smart, That you're 'tired to hail from everywhere!" And he hit the hind sights of my rifle, you see, And he had old Tom Evans say that much to me.

So we won that fight without any loss, And that dog that I never afore kem across, Nor sense, I don't want any more in mine, As such terrible odds, of ninety 'ginst nine, Are a most too much for the best of men; But that stranger I ort to be counted as ten.

One beautiful night in the month of May, A decade ago, a horseman faced a lonely road which intervened between two frontier towns. He stood within the edge of a strip of timber, and ever and anon leaned forward and looked anxiously down the road.

Diaz Romero was expecting some one, and the fendish expression that sat on

throned upon his face, with the lariat ready for use, boded no good to the coming person.

The person for whom the ranchero watched and waited was Marquette Andre, whose wedding-day, according to appointment, was not a week distant. The Mexican knew that his successful rival would traverse that road before dawn, and in that dreary wooded spot he intended to lariat him. That diabolical deed accomplished, he would drag him twenty miles or more over timbered country at his horse's heels.

At last the watcher with murderous intent was rewarded, for a horse and his rider loomed up between him and the light sky, as he looked down the road for the hundredth time. He inspected his lasso. It was ready to "draw" on human throat, and a devilish smile wreathed his lips as he thought of his revenge. His steed seemed to have grown into a statue, so motionless he stood, and nothing betrayed the presence of man and beast. Truly, fortune was propitious.

All unconscious of the terrible doom in store for him, the horseman continued to approach, whistling unconcernedly a Mexican air. The ranchero could not distinguish his features in the shade, but felt that it was his enemy.

At last the horseman was opposite the ranchero, whose lariat shot from his hands, and dropped over the doomed man's head. A yell pierced the night air as the ranchero sunk the spurs into his steed's quivering flesh, and the lariat man was thrown to the ground. His cries were stifled by the infernal crowd, which cut the flesh, and severed a large vein that nourished the brain.

Presently the ranchero crossed the frontier and found himself on Mexican soil. Not a stick of timber greeted his vision in the moonlight. Now and then he glanced behind him to the end of the lariat, at the blackened face upturned to the lutescent full moon.

"Oh, what a revenge!" cried the ranchero, triumphantly, from the depths of his vengeful heart. "I swore that she should never wed Marquette Andre, and have I not kept my oath? Moon, stars, look down and answer me! Recording angel, write in thy great book that Diaz Romero's vow was kept, and devil, thank him for the soul he has sent to thy sulphurous abode."

In the same wild strain as the above he continued to speak as he flew over the Mexican plain.

Still on, on went the living and his victim—the murderer and the murdered. Suddenly the ranchero drew rein and sprung from the saddle.

"I have ridden ninety miles or more," he muttered, and I'm going to give Marquette a little rest. Perhaps Andre is tired. I'll question him, poor fellow!"

The last words were not spoken in a pitying tone, for pity was not a tenant of the ranchero's heart. His voice, on the contrary, was bitterly sarcastic, and a fiendish light stole over his face as he neared his victim.

He stooped over the almost unrecognizable features; but the next moment sprung to his feet with a cry of horror. Ah! well might he shriek at that moment, and stagger from the blackened face, for it was not that of his rival! He trusted himself to a second look, before he fully believed the stunning evidence of his senses.

Yes, the lips he had kissed a thousand times, in days gone by, were really before him—the lips of his younger brother!

"Oh, Jose," he cried, remorse and guilt thundering at the citadel of his heart, "I have lariatied thee instead of him whose life I sought! I knew not that thou wert in Angolos. Oh, boy, my only brother, I do sire to die for my damning deed—I will die!"

He imprinted a kiss upon his brother's lips, and severed the lariat. Then he scooped out a grave upon the plain with his knife, and laid the murdered one therein to sleep the long sleep of the dead. When the mound was completed, he rose to his feet, and called upon the angels to guard his brother's grave from despoliation by man or beast. Then he divested himself of his scarlet sash, with which he blindfolded his horse. With a last fond look upon the little mound, that covered all that he loved on earth, he mounted Marquita and bound himself to the steed. Then, after turning his head to the west, he blindfolded himself.

"Now for death!" he shouted, and he drove the spurs into Marquita's gory flanks.

By and by the music of seething waters smote the ranchero's ears. He smiled, for death was very near. On, on, until the blindfolded horse leaped from the cliffs, carrying his rider to a dreadful death upon the foam-covered rocks.

Half an hour after the lariat of Jose Romero, Marquette Andre passed the wooded spot, whistling a lively air, and all unconscious of the fact that a noble young man had died for him.

More than once, as he rode across the Mexican plain, he wondered who slept beneath that solitary flower-covered mound; nor did he ever dream, as he kissed Inez, his bride, of his narrow escape.

## My Stratagem.

BY S. J. CURTIS.

WHEN Herman Montross asked me to become his wife, I was ignorant of the existence of Dobson. Otherwise, the "yes" I made use of on that occasion would have been modified to a conditional consent—I should have stipulated that Dobson be left in the place he then honored with his presence.

But it was not to be. The wedding-day was fixed, and Herman suggested that Dobson should be first groomsman.

"You see, Nettie," he went on, as I made no objection to the arrangement, "Dobson has been knocking about West for several years, and things have not gone very well with him. I'm afraid. But he writes there is a good opening for him here in New York, and he may as well come on a little sooner and be here in time for the wedding."

Again I smiled assent, unsuspicious of what was to follow, and Dobson came.

Herman greeted his friend with much embarrassment, and I was presented in due form. On the whole, Dobson failed to impress me as the hero Herman evidently considered him. His figure was tall and slim, his hair sandy, with mustache and whiskers of a more decided tint. His eyes were blue and his smile genial, otherwise he appeared to me insignificant.

It was Dobson who met us at the depot on our return from the wedding trip, Dob-

son who shone most conspicuously at the reception that followed, and Dobson who first broke bread with us in our new home.

I learned to know his step on the stairs as well as I did Herman's; I grew accustomed to the sight of two overcoats and two leavers on the hall-rack, and to the spare room in a constant state of readiness.

It became intolerable at last this perpetual presence of Dobson, and I determined to break up the firm of Damon and Pythias at all hazards.

My conscience smote me for my inhospitable resolve when Herman said, kindly:

"You have no idea, darling, how Dobson enjoys being with us so much. He has never had a home of his own, you know, and ours seems a little Paradise to him."

But the words were suggestive. Why should not Dobson have a home of his own? He was doing a good business, his tastes were eminently domestic—in fact I formed a plan for Dobson's enslavement and my emancipation, and forthwith proceeded to carry it into execution.

I had a certain little friend, Daisy Fairfax by name. Daisy had been teaching for some years in Wisconsin, and I felt convinced that if I could get her to spend her vacation with me, she and Dobson would fancy each other.

Herman, of course, must not know my plans, or with his usual engaging candor, he would probably inform Dobson, and so render my efforts nugatory. Nor must Dobson suspect my intentions, for he was shy where ladies were concerned, and if I would not have him take the alarm at once, I must work cautiously and secretly.

Herman seemed eminently pleased at the idea of Daisy's being with us, and one sunny morning my bright-eyed little friend arrived.

We spent the day talking over old times, and toward evening I was called out to attend a sick neighbor. It was nearly eleven o'clock before I got back, and Herman was alone in the library.

"Daisy has retired," he said, as I entered. "She was pretty well worn out with her day's journey, and I advised her not to wait for you."

"Has Mr. Dobson been around?" I asked, with feigned indifference, as I drew off my gloves. Of course I knew that he had.

"Oh, yes; he left just before you came in."

I ventured a little further.

"Did he and Daisy seem to like each other?"

"First rate," he answered, without looking up from his paper, and I questioned no more.

Time passed on, and I watched closely for developments. Mr. Dobson and Daisy certainly liked each other's society. They talked, sung and read together, and the bay-window was always occupied. For the first time in my married life I enjoyed the privilege of a confidential chat with my husband, and I was hopeful for future results.

At last Daisy announced her intention of leaving us.

"I have had a charming visit, Nettie, dear," she said. "And before I go there is something I want to tell you."

Her pretty pink cheeks spoke more eloquently than her tongue, and she continued:

"On Christmas I am to be married to Mr. George Dobson."

In an instant my arms were around her waist.

"I am so glad, my pet!" I exclaimed, with unfeigned thankfulness.

"Perhaps I should have told you before," Daisy went on, toying with her watch-chain; and, indeed, I wanted to write and let you know at the time, but—"

"Write and let me know at the time," I repeated; "why, Daisy, you don't mean that you knew Mr. Dobson before you came here?"

"Of course I do," was Daisy's laughing answer. "I met him when I first went West to teach, and we have been engaged more than three years."

For once in my life I was too much astonished to speak.

"You see, dear," Daisy went on, demurely, "George's prospects were so uncertain that I've thought it best not to make our engagement public till things were a little more settled."

It seemed to me such an excess of reserve and caution was uncalled for, and I said, reproachfully:

"But you might have made an exception in my favor, I think."

"Oh, Herman knew all the time, only he had promised George not to mention it," was the consoling reply.

"And you mean to say that you three have known of this little matter all these years, and that I alone have been kept in the dark?" I demanded.

"Don't be angry, dear," pleaded Daisy. "It was sufficient cause for anger. I had, moreover, the mortifying reflection that all my strategy and finesse had been employed to bring about a consummation, which, however devoutly it was to be wished, would probably have been accomplished just as well without my interference."

But as things had turned out pretty much as I wished after all, I concluded not to complain; and when Mrs. George Dobson became mistress of her home, I was left in undisturbed possession of mine.

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## SUMMER.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

The summer comes in chariot drawn:  
She steps out with a smile:  
Come, handford, put these horses up  
For she will stay a while!

Give her the best room in the house:  
Glad let her welcome be:  
She brings blown blossoms to the vine—  
The tree-tod to the tree.

A thousand, thousand articles  
Are in the baggage train:  
She brings the joyous songs of birds,  
And linen coats again!

Bright bows to span the flying shower,  
Soft scents upon the breeze,  
And life and sunshine to the heart,  
And tender early pens.

She brings the sweets of sun and shade—  
The poetry of the year:  
She brings the first for birds to fly,  
And bunions to appear.

She brings sweet music to the rills,  
In varied sharps and flats,  
And earth puts on its sweetest smile,  
And men put on straw hats.

She hangs a softer mist above  
The leaping waterfalls:  
The young leaf takes a deeper green—  
Young girls take parasols.

She clothes the fields with rippling grain,  
Far billowing on the view,  
And driving clouds are very high—  
And early fruit is, too.

She brings the sweet south wind to cheer  
The country-side and town:  
She causes jasmines to spring up,  
And collars to wilt down.

I hear the music of her voice  
Breathe all the landscape o'er:  
She says, "Young man, now that will do,  
Please don't write any more."

## The Ninth's Major.

## A STORY OF INDIA.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

A FAIRER night than that which found Idaline Campbell seated at the deep casement of her boudoir never threw its star-gemmed veil over Cawnpore. So many charms did it possess, that the fair girl would not trim the lamps, but from her window drank in its beauties with poetic rapture.

Her father was the colonel of the Ninth regiment of Foot, and she had followed him to the land of the Sepoy, far from a happy home beneath the scepter of Victoria. Very soon she became the favorite of the garrison, and nightly, in the club-rooms of the officers, toasts were drunk to her beauty and worth.

Unheeded by her upon the night above written, the hours flitted by, and when at last she glanced at her tiny jeweled watch, she was surprised at the lateness of the Indian night.

The golden hands of the watch proclaimed the hour of midnight.

"Father thinks me asleep," she said, with a smile, "and it were unkind in me to resist the wooing of the somnolent god. But I could not turn away from the beauties of the night, and father shall not know that I have been so wakeful. Ha! the celestial scene is changing. Foreboding clouds near my queen of the skies—There! ha!" and she suddenly shrank from the window.

The last exclamation was caused by seeing a human form crawling across the low roof of an Indian dwelling, directly opposite her chamber. It possessed the movements of the serpent, and evidently its destination was an open window at the termination of the roof.

"Is it thus that the princess' lovers seek her chamber?" murmured Idaline, watching the man on the roof. "But no, it can not be, for Iwaddah left the palace this morning, and I am certain that she is not to return for a fortnight. Then the serpent is a robber!"

She moved her chair nearer the window again, and resolved to watch the midnight visitant. Not a sound came up from below, and the man made none in crawling over the light flag roof, so secure sufficient to bear his weight. Idaline saw him enter the Princess Iwaddah's chamber, and she watched a long time for his reappearance. At last she was rewarded, for he came to the window, and something reflected back the rays of the moon from his hands.

"He is a robber," murmured the colonel's daughter. "He has stolen the princess' jewels. Shall I give the alarm? No. In the confusion he might escape, and I can not identify him."

As she spoke, the thief glided to the ground, and walked directly toward her; and, as he approached, she perceived that he was clad in the light undress uniform of an English officer.

Suddenly Idaline, determined to discover the person of the robber, concealed her form among the curtains of the casement, and, unperceived, looked down upon him. He passed directly beneath her, and she recognized in his face the major of her father's regiment—Colin Bruce.

"My God!" she cried, "is it possible that such a villain wears her Majesty's epaulettes? I could not be mistaken, for I noted the crimson scar above his eye, and no eye in Cawnpore save his is thus crowned."

With her mind filled with strange thoughts, the commandant's daughter sought her couch, and the following morning Major Bruce found himself summoned into Idaline's presence.

Handsome, talented, and refined, the son of a noble house, and, withal, an agreeable companion, the major had long been counted among Idaline's friends. But the night previous to the one described above, he had asked for the hand of the colonel's child, but it had been refused him, because it belonged, by promise, to another. Idaline respected the major of the Ninth, notwithstanding his passion for gambling, a vice from which but few Indian officers are free.

He took his rejection good-naturedly, which stamped him more the man in Idaline's eyes.

He obeyed the summons with alacrity, wondering what the Beauty of the Regiment wished with him at such an early hour.

Idaline met him in the spacious and handsomely-furnished parlor of her father's quarters, and broached the subject nearest her heart at once.

Major I summoned you hither to say that Princess Iwaddah's jewels were stolen precisely at midnight last night."

He started at her words, and the color faded from his cheeks.

"And why should the theft concern

me?" he asked. "Is it your pleasure to appoint me a detective, Miss Campbell?"

"Far from such a design," she answered, fixing her dark, penetrating eyes upon him. "Major Colin Bruce, you have the jewels in your possession!"

He tried to laugh her accusation down, but the attempt was a miserable failure.

"I saw you enter Iwaddah's chamber," she quickly continued. "I watched you emerge therefrom with the jewels in your hands, and when you passed beneath my window, I completed your recognition. Sir, it is utterly useless for you to deny the theft. I am ashamed of such conduct, especially in an officer of the 'old Ninth.' And now, sir, I propose this compromise, for I do not want to send you home disgraced. Restore the jewels to Iwaddah's chamber before she returns, and the secret of the theft shall forever remain locked in my bosom."

While Idaline spoke, the major calmly returned her gaze, and dark plots flitted through his mind.

"I will accept your compromise, Miss Campbell," he said, in a forced tone, when she had finished, "and I pray that you will overlook my indiscretion. Gambling debts forced me to it, and I will leave them unpaid until I can procure my annual remittance from father. To-morrow night, if you will sit at your window, you will see Iwaddah's jewels restored, and when the princess returns she will find them where she saw them last."

The colonel's daughter was satisfied with her work, and the major took his departure.

"What!" he cried, when he was beyond ear-shot of headquarters. "Idaline Campbell, do you think that I am going to let five hundred thousand dollars in jewels slip through my fingers thus tamely? I'm what you might term a desperate man now, and must work in desperate ways, if I would hold what I have now."

He walked past the officers' quarters, and sought a collection of hovels in the southern suburbs of the city. Not a British soldier was in sight, and into one of those huts the major of the Ninth Foot glided.

A tall, half-naked Hindoo advanced from a gloomy corner to greet his unexpected visitor.

It was the infamous Guzzeh chief of the stragglers of Cawnpore.

"What wants Englishess?" asked the straggler, toying with the fatal cord that hung from his waist.

"I want a person strangled," answered Colin Bruce.

"What will Englishess give Guzzeh?"

"Five hundred rupees!"

The straggler's eyes flashed with the greed of gold.

"Who Englishess wants strangled?"

"The child of the proud man," was the reply.

Among the Hindoos, Colonel Campbell's soldierly bearing had gained him the sobriquet of "the proud man."

The chief of the stragglers was taken aback at the Englishman's reply.

"What Englishess wants her strangled for?"

"That does not concern Guzzeh," was the evasive response. "Before to-morrow's sun goes down she must be dead—strangled!"

The straggler executed an affirmative nod, and after agreeing that the five hundred rupees should not be paid until the major received money from England, the conference ended, and Colin Bruce took his departure.

"Ha! ha! ha!" he chuckled, as he hurried to his quarters. "The jewels are not going to slip through my fingers. The garrison flags will fly at half-mast to-morrow night. Guzzeh will do the work nobly. He has strangled scores in his lifetime."

"I will join you ere dusk, Idaline. I hope you can content yourself with the book until I come. Books are oftentimes more sprightly companions than man, you know," and, with a laugh, Courcy Delavan saw Idaline Campbell depart.

Attached to the regimental barracks was quite a jungle, from which wild beasts and numerous serpents had been driven. Its shade was welcomed by the soldiers when off duty, and among the giant palms they passed the hours of many a long Indian day.

Thither often Idaline Campbell retired, and to her the hours passed among its beauties were the happiest hours of her young life.

"The sun was still high in the heavens when she left her lover, whom duty kept at the barracks, and found her way to her favorite spot beneath the branching fan-like limbs of a palm, at whose foot she was wont to repose on a robe, bravely won by her lover from the royal Bengal tiger."

When Idaline entered the jungle, dark eyes were fixed upon her, and when she became interested in the book upon her lap, until all outward objects became unnoticed, an almost nude Hindoo, from whose pre-

hensile fingers dangled a long cord, glided toward her.

As the wily Grimalkin approached the unsuspecting mouse, so the dark-browed straggler approached the beautiful girl. Ever and anon he would pause, listen, and then sneak forward again.

At length he reached the foot of the tree at which Idaline sat, and raised the fatal noose over her head. But, as the cord trembled in its departure, a hand hurled him to the earth, and Guzzeh, the straggler, found his arms pinioned by Courcy Delavan.

With a shriek, Idaline started to her feet, and gazed upon the scene enacted at the foot of the tree.

A shout brought several soldiers to Delavan's assistance, and with great difficulty, for Guzzeh was the possessor of herculean strength, the victory was completed.

At first the chief of the stragglers was inclined to be uncommunicative; but, when the infuriated soldiery threatened to strangle him with his own cord, he confessed the compact between himself and Colin Bruce.

A short interval elapsed between the straggler's failure and the villainous major's arrest. He soon found himself before a court, through the sentence of which his head was shaved, and, after receiving forty lashes, he was drummed beyond the limits of the city. He did not long survive his disgrace, for he sent himself into eternity by his own hands.

Guzzeh was handed over to the authorities of Cawnpore, who caused him to suffer the terrible death he had unjustly meted out to many.

Of course Iwaddah's jewels were restored to her, and a few weeks after the scenes recorded above, Idaline Campbell became the bride of Captain Delavan, a baronet's son and heir.

A NICE young man in New Orleans ran away with and married the supposed daughter of a highly respectable lady, and came back for the lady's blessing, which was freely given, together with the information that the girl was not her daughter, but a quadroon servant girl.

Kaintucky before, and I ain't seen none since. The stock, what little there was, come nigh all perishing—all did that warn't housed up snug—and by-and-by the game and varmints began coming in to the barn-yard, and to try and get something to keep 'em alive."

"Well, as I said, this lasted a good while, but presently the break-up come, and it come in a hurry, too."

"The night before it turned a little warmer, and the next morning, there were signs of a heavy rain. It was warm and soft, and the snow begun melting before the sun was fairly up."

"Dick Atkinson had suffered terribly for something to eat and feed his family on during this hard snap. The poor fellow was down with the rheumatiz bad, and there hadn't been any one about to help him, for I was away most of the time, and didn't know the fix he was in."

"Just before day, Willie—that was the lad's name—came into his father's room, saying as how he had heard turkeys on the opposite hill beyond the creek, and asked to go after them."

"Shouldering his little rifle, the lad started across the bottom and reached the creek, which was frozen over hard and firm enough to bear up a horse. Just as he reached the other side he heard his little sister calling, and before he could say or do any thing, she was across, and begging to go and see the turkey killed."

"It was but a little way, he thought, and he let her go."

"The boy stalked the turkey like an old hunter, but the gobbler was wild, and flew from tree to tree, constantly leading the lad further and further back into the timber."

"At last, in a valley, Willie left his little companion under the sunny-side of a rock, and continued after the game."

"More than two hours were spent in this, but at last he got his shot, and downed the bird."

"The boy observing that a storm was fast rising, hurried back to where the little sister had been left, only to find that she was no longer there."

"Alarmed, but not disheartened, the little fellow took her trail, just as an old woodsman would have done, and found her

feet off were the mangled remains of Willie, his little hand still grasping the rifle, which was broken at the stock. He was literally torn all to pieces, and there warn't hardly a rag of clothing on him."

"At first we didn't see the little girl, but a minute later, a shout from one of the men called us to the foot of a leaning tree a little way off, and there she lay, apparently not hurt, but cold and dead. I mean that she had no outward marks or wounds to show the cause of death."

"A close examination of the ground, the body of the panther and those of the children, revealed the story about as clearly as if some of us had been eye-witnesses to the struggle."

"The little ones had found the log gone, and had huddled down at the foot of the tree to shelter themselves. The panther had here attacked them, probably springing upon them from the branches overhead, and had grasped the little one by the back, crushing her spine, and made off to the leaning tree, up which she started with her burden."

"At this moment Willie must have run forward, and at close range, fired. The powder had singed the beast's hair where the ball struck her behind the fore-leg. This so enraged the panther that she turned, mortally wounded upon the boy, and clawed and bit him to death before she herself gave out."

"It was a sad scene, and I thought it would kill poor Atkinson, but it did not. That is the story of Panther Creek, and why it is so called."

## Beat Time's Notes.

A GOOD wife is a crown to her husband, but a mean one is a sovereign—ruling currency.

I KNOW such a great liar, that if I should hear he was dead and he should afterward come and tell me he wasn't, I shouldn't believe him.

I KNOW an editor out West who would sooner change his principles than his linen.

A MAN selling tombstones should talk in sepulchral tones.

A CYNIC hearing a song through, remarked that it was well done—better than the doing.

THIS is the rock of ages, said the father after rocking two hours, and the baby still awake.

THE last thing out: out of debt.

THE politician who failed to get the consulate got dis-consolate.

MANY men who say they wouldn't tell a lie for the world, are perfectly willing to tell one for a shilling.

SOME toppers in reforming, drink the hardest stuff before they quit, and then postpone the quitting.

YOU can't convince a fool of his folly; you might as well try to measure out a quart of beans with a ten-foot pole.

THE first reports of gold nuggets being found in California, was taken as nugat-ory evidence.

ON what slight things do our destinies turn? Some of us might have been born mules. I shudder to think of it!

A HUSBAND whose wife ran off with another man, said he never had any little fool thing to make him so mad in his life.

MANY a romantic maiden's castle in the air turns out to be a cabin in the woods.

MANY men would willingly let their wives have the last word—provided it was the last.

DEATH is a contented being; he takes life easy.

SANTRY, said a mother to her young hopeless, who was walking on the fence, "you'll fall off there and break your neck, and I'll whip you to death."

I HAVE tried very hard to object to my admirers having my statue made, and placed on the top of the new City Court-house, but I can't. I would desire it to be as large as life as I always am, made out of marble, no brass about it. I want it to be made like all other statues, with a sheet wrapped around me as if I had just jumped out of bed. On the base they might have "Liberty," or "Honor," or "Charity," or any other nick-names they might see fit to give me. I am perfectly willing that they should go on with the noble work. I don't know that they have ever proposed a statue to my memory, but then if they should, I mean.

MILLIONS of plus are made every day, and the question is asked, where do they go to? I don't know, but I find some in the carpet when I go across it in my stockings. I find them in my bed when I jump in in a hurry. I found one in the cushion of the pew at church, for when I sat down with my usual dignity last Sunday, I rose vehemently; I find them in my boots; I find them more frequently in my fingers; occasionally I find one going down my throat. In fact, I find them every place where they ought not to be, and generally when I'm not looking for them. The only wonder is how they can make enough to scatter them around so plentiful.

BOBSON'S snuff is the best thing to manufacture sneezes I know of. I got in a pinch the other day—in my nose. The first sneeze lifted me off the floor; the next bumped my head against the ceiling; the next brought tears; the next brought profanity. My wife pulled my nose, but that did no good nor harm. I sneezed four hours and twenty minutes. I took it because I had a cold in my head. There is nothing to speak of in my head now, not that I know of.

If you make your life up of odds and ends, be careful lest in the end the odds be against you.

It is a singular rule, and you will always find it so (except in cases where it fails), that aged women lose their teeth and loosen their tongues. BEAT TIME.



THE NINTH'S MAJOR.

## Camp-Fire Yarns.

## "Panther Creek."

BY RALPH KINGWOOD.

"THIS is 'Panther Run,'" said my guide, as we were crossing a narrow, deep stream in the mountainous region of Eastern Kentucky, "and it got its name from one of the saddest occurrences that I ever witnessed. If you like I will relate the story, as it may serve, at least, to break the monotony of our ride."

I hastened to assure the old woodsman that nothing would suit me better, and he at once continued.

"You see that the country through which we are traveling is even yet a wild one, but where you now see twenty clearings, there was not one forty years ago, and I have ridden day in and out without even seeing the blue smoke from a settler's cabin."

"At that time game and varmints were almost too thick to thrive in these parts. Buffaloes had not long been gone, and bear, deer, turkey, panthers, wildcat and wolves, were to be seen in any number desired."

"I had led a kind of roving, half-civilized life ever since I had come out from the old State, Virginia, and at last I determined to clear me a bit of land, build me a snug cabin, and settle down quiet for the balance of my days."

"It took me a good while to make up my mind where to squat, but I finally fixed upon the place where you found me this morning."

"I had been there only a year, when another settler, a new-comer from t'other side of the mountains, took a fancy to the valley beyond me—you saw the double cabin as you came to my place—and we gathered together and put up his house, and started 'em fair."

"They were nice people, Dick Atkinson and his wife were, and they had two as pretty children, a boy and a girl, as ever I saw in my life. The boy was twelve, and the girl eight years old; but the lad was more like a full-grown man than any thing else. Why, he'd go into the timber and pile oak-rails, or cord-wood equal to most boys of sixteen or more, and as to handling a rifle, he was as good as the best of them. In fact, he was a wonderful boy; but that did not keep him from meeting a fate that any one was liable to then, and now, too, for the matter of that."

"It was the second winter after Atkinson had settled in the valley, and it opened terribly cold, I tell you. In the middle of December the snow fell near a foot deep on the level, and directly after it turned awful cold, and held at that for more'n three weeks, nearly a whole month."

"No such weather had ever been seen in

eventually, but at what time or place is not known."

"While hunting her, the storm burst forth, and it rained in a way that I never saw it rain in all my life. Mind you, it was yet winter, but the flood was like that of a July day."

"In less than an hour the creek was out of its bounds, the ice smashed all to pieces, and carried away."

"It rained all day, and long toward the middle of the afternoon, Dick Atkinson came in and missed the children."

"A short search showed that they were not about the house, or neighborhood, and then the alarm was given, and by night a dozen or more of us were collected at Atkinson's, prepared to take the woods on a hunt for the little ones."

"I needn't stop to tell you what a time we had of it. It kept on raining, and it was so infernally dark that it was impossible to move a step without the torches, and these were put out every little while by the rain."

"All night we kept it up, new hunters dropping in every now and then, as the alarm spread over the settlements, some of them coming as much as ten and fifteen miles to help the search."

"Day was just breaking when the rain stopped, and half an hour afterward I struck a trail that a little examination showed to be the children's."

"It led down the valley toward the creek, and when I saw that, I knew the brave little fellow was making for an old poplar log that used to lay across the stream, resting on high banks on both sides, and which had always been thought to be out of reach of high water."

"It was at least five or six miles from the house, but the little chap had crossed on it many a time, and when he found he could not cross anywhere else, he turned toward this bridge, and in the darkest night that ever I saw, and through as heavy timber as ever grew, he found it. I tell you, lad, it ain't every man that could 'a' done it."

"Without following the trail, we made for the old log, but before we got within five hundred yards of it, we saw it had been washed away."

"We kept on, however, thinking the little ones might be waiting there, and, sure enough, they were there, but in what condition?"

"I don't ever want to look at such a sight again, as I saw by the side of that muddy creek that early morning."

"There was a small clearing along the side we were on, the timber not coming entirely down to the edge. Maybe it was ten feet in width; and within this opening the most terrible scene was before our eyes."

"The ground, soft and muddy from the rain, was all torn up, trampled and bloody. Close by the water lay the dead body of the biggest panther I ever saw, and a few